

have multiplied; we are a living miracle unto ourselves, and seem not to see in the person of to-day, the healthy, happy, hopeful man of yesterday. How has the strong become feeble! The wealthy impoverished! The talented imbecile! The admired forgotten and neglected! Surely there is no change so great, so striking, so instructive as that produced in ourselves.

But again—we see it even in our spiritual course. There has not been that advance in piety which, at first, we had reason to look forward to. Advance, growth, increase there must be, or life may be doubted. Yet, I doubt not, with many of us, that growth has not been *equal*; rather, I should say, by fits and starts, in spite, notwithstanding, of fluctuation of feeling and experience. Yet, praised be God, an invisible hand has led and upheld us through all our wanderings, otherwise we had, long since fainted and fallen. Where let us ask is our *first* love?—The enthusiasm which filled our breasts when first we knew the Lord?—The fruitful joy of drawing nearer and nearer unto God? The “closer walk” we once enjoyed? The child-like simplicity of our infant faith? The purity and heavenly-mindedness of our early conversation? The virgin thoughts of happiness and heaven? Gone! or mostly gone; choked, and in a measure, smothered by the thorns and thistles of this lower world.

Such is life! within, without, and around us. Upon all we see, and hear, and know “*mutability*” is written. What saith the Bible about it—“Man continueth not in *one* stay.” “Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets?” He cometh up and is cut down, like a flower; His life fleeth, as a shadow, and the length of his day is, as a tale that is told,—as a dream when one awaketh, swifter than a weavers shuttle,” or than clouds chasing each other in the wintry sky, doth his life seem to come to an end and his history to a termination.

Well can I fancy some of you who have met with nought but disappointment here, and are weary of so much change, sighing forth the earnest wish of your hearts, for something that *abideth*, that continueth *constant and true*, and hath nothing of *fickleness* about it. You desire a faithful friend, who knoweth how to counsel in prosperity as well as console in adversity. You want one who can hold you up, when in danger of falling, and pray for you when your faith faileth. One who will be the *same* to you when crossing the Jordan of Death as He hath already been to you in life.