

upon a plain deep footmark that you couldn't possibly doubt about. How joyfully you would follow that, and how bravely and cheerily you would push on.

Well, there's something like that in your Christian journey. For in that there are not only the common daily steps that want a little looking for to see clearly (although we generally can see them if we try), but now and then we come upon a clear plain footmark of our dear Lord's that there is no mistake about, and which we cannot doubt for a moment is His.

Do you know what that plain footmark is?

"This is thankworthy, if a man for conscience towards God endured grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently? But if when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps."

So the footmark is, "Suffering for doing right."

"Ah," you say perhaps, "that is hard lines. It's surely unjust too. When a fellow tries to do right (and it isn't any too easy!) he oughtn't to suffer for it, he ought to be praised. People should suffer for doing wrong, not doing right."

Well, before our Lord Jesus Christ came the world thought very much as you do—that if people did wrong they should be punished, but if right they ought to be rewarded.

Now that is true; but then, don't you see it is possible to go a step farther? Jesus did that. He taught the world a higher, grander lesson than any they had learnt before.

He taught them that though bearing a punishment which is deserved is right, there is yet something higher and nobler still.

What is that? Why, bearing the punishment which is not deserved; doing a good thing, and yet suffering for it. That (He taught us) is noble and heroic, or "thankworthy," whichever name you like best to call it.

How did Jesus teach us that?

Why, in the best possible way. By suffering Himself for right-doing.

Do you suppose that when the thorns ran into His brow, and the terrible lash made wounds upon His flesh, that He deserved all that pain?

No, it was all undeserved, you know that very well.

That is how the footmark came. And it is such a plain, clear one. I am sure you will love to follow it, and do that thing (perhaps the only one we ever can do) which is "thankworthy."

But I'm afraid a good many people don't (or won't) see the footmark, plain as it is. Else why does one often hear this sort of thing?—you have, I dare say—

"It's too bad! I won't bear it! It isn't just! Here am I taking ever so much pains with my work, and he says it's done badly. I won't stand it! I'll give up. Say I'll leave." And at this point some heavy object is probably pitched right across the room.

Ah! there's no thought here of suffering for right-doing being thankworthy! No thought of its being joyful—joyful just because it is following a footstep of our dear Lord's.

What should you do if you were treated a little unjustly one of these days—when you have tried your best, and yet are blamed? Not storm and rave, nor mutter and sulk.

Oh, no. Here is a grand chance, you say to yourself, of doing the thing that's thankworthy. So you bear the injustice in a quiet, manly way, and don't let yourself even feel sulky about it. The Master's step is so plain and clear that you really must think about that, and not your own grievance.

Another instance. There was a good deal of bad behaviour the other day among some of the fellows you are with. You, who are one of the elder ones, certainly took no part in the silly larking; and when it came to a row, you honestly tried to stop it, and get a little sense into your companions' heads.

But you got no credit for what you did, for when the master spoke some stern words about it all afterwards, he included you in the general rebuke, having got an impression that everybody

was equally to blame. That was distinctly unjust, and you felt it a good deal until—the thought of the footstep came to help you. And then suddenly a light came into your face, which those about you couldn't at all understand. For true it is, "The secret of the Lord is among them that fear Him."

One more instance. Doing right is often laughed at. And, as everybody knows, being laughed at is hard to bear. It is a sort of suffering, and rather a sharp sort too sometimes.

I don't think now-a-days boys are ridiculed for saying their prayers. As the author of Tom Brown says, "the old heathen state of things of boys not praying has gone out," he hopes, "for ever."

But still there is laughing at lads who are "over particular," who are "trying to be saints," and so on.

Going to Holy Communion is thought "setting yourself up," "too much like a parson," and "not the sort of thing for boys."

And so if boys persist in going, they are shown pretty plainly what others think of it.

Words can sting, I know, and are painful enough, especially when you are young.

Never mind. People have borne much more than words for the sake of following Christ—the sharp pain of being avoided and hated; so what are a few cutting remarks compared to that?

Only a stronger reason for keeping on with what you know to be right.

By and by, when you are older, you may meet with people who are given to sneering at the Bible, and think it fun to joke about sacred things.

Such talk is bad, all bad, and its best to speak up at once, and say quietly but firmly, "I don't like that sort of thing, I'd rather not hear it."

Yet saying this is not easy, but disagreeable and painful, for there's a contemptuous laugh afterwards, and a volley of remarks, such as—

"Oh, yes, he thinks everybody ought to be an old woman. He can't see a joke, he's so slow."

Ah, you plant your foot bravely in the Master's step, and you even feel that He is very near. For that struggle to follow Him and stick up for the right is helping to make you His, not only by and by, but now.

And what a joyful thought that is!

"O let me see Thy footmarks,
And in them plant mine own;
That hope to follow duly
Is in Thy strength alone."

The Church and the Masses.

Mr. Lewin thus writes:—"Where are we to look for the mind of the Church of England with regard to the relation of the classes to the masses? Shall we not answer in her Book of Common Prayer? In her services for holy baptism—for holy matrimony—for burial of the dead. A saintly bishop, now at rest, once told that as he stood at the font of a country church, two infants—a boy and a girl—were brought to him for baptism, one the child of the owner of the whole district, of noble lineage, as men speak, the other the child of almost destitute parents. Which should he baptize first? The mind of the Church seemed clear. 'All equal are within the Church's gate.' He had merely to consider which was the boy and which the girl, and as it happened he had to take the poor man's child first into his arms, and the noble lady, whose child came but second in order, expressed her thankfulness for the bishop's loyal obedience to the wishes of the Church. Well may Bishop Cleveland Cox sing of the much slandered Church of our country—the mark for so much thoughtless censure:—

Our Mother the Church has never a child
To honour above the rest,
But she singeth the same for mighty kings
And the veriest babe on the breast;
And the Bishop goes down to the narrow bed
As the ploughman's child is laid,
And alike she blesseth the dark-browed serf
And the chief in his robes arrayed.
She sprinkles the drops of the bright new birth
The same on the low and high.
And christens their bodies with dust to dust,
When earth with its earth must lie;
Oh, the poor man's friend is the Church of Christ
From birth to his funeral day;
She makes him the Lord's in her surpliced arms,
And singeth his burial lay."

Christian Thankfulness.

This is the true Christian's motto: As we have received mercy from God we are encouraged to labour in His service from love and gratitude, God's mercy ever coming first, not to reward work done, but exciting us to work to come. And this is so in the great matter of our whole lives; we are forgiven freely, and they are called upon to live as those who are forgiven, as children whom God loves; and it is true also of many particular points and events in our lives, where God's mercies, wholly undeserved, are poured upon us, to quicken us to love Him in return. We know this, indeed; and have all heard it many times over; but the state of the world clearly shows that we do not feel it, or, in Scriptural language, do not really believe it. It is impossible, when we look at society, however hastily, to conceive of it as living in thankfulness to God, as having received great mercies at His hands, and as owing Him its most grateful service in return. We cannot so conceive of society; and if we look to that which concerns us most nearly, if we look into our own hearts and lives, can we more easily conceive it of ourselves?—*Thomas Arnold, D.D.*

The People's Gospel.

Every little while we hear it said, what an interesting time this is to live in, with its eager activities and rapid gains, its marvellous inventions and triumphant forces, its conquests by hand and brain, its telling out aloud of the secrets of the earth and sea and air and stars! But we are living, all of us, in the presence of a far more majestic movement, and it is the old miracle of the Galilean mountain side and the hungry wayfarers over again. Underneath, within, beyond all these mechanisms and expositions of mortal energy and skill, there is building silently another commonwealth, a house of almighty justice and love for the brotherhood of man, a city of God out of heaven, not reared by the builders of roads, or factories, or ships, or empires, or universities. Ministers of the gospel proclaim it; statesmen may help bring it on; scholars may serve in it; but so can every one of us, like the common men who, before they were apostles, handed the bread to the multitude—our young men and boys, like the lad with the loaves. Out of the class-rooms of colleges, out of libraries, lecture halls, work shops and the fields ought to come workmen in that work, and master-workmen. Out of the homes of a believing and thankful people and the arms of gracious mothers should come laborers just as needful and just as true as those of Galilee, who find it honour enough and mastery enough to follow the steps and share the homely lot of Him who is the Master of us all. And all this will be the people's gospel.—*Bishop Huntington.*

General Lee's Indifference to Danger.

When the infantry was hurrying to the support of Fitz Lee's cavalry at Spottsylvania Courthouse, as each division arrived it would form into line on the right of its predecessor. I happened to be near General Lee when a few bullets cut the limbs and struck the ground near him. Some general—I forget who—said:—

"General, this is no place for you; do go away at once to a safe place."

He replied, with a half complaining smile and manner:—

"I wish I knew where my place is on the battle-field; wherever I go, some one tells me it is not the place for me to be."

But he was always deeply touched by these indications of the devotion of his army and people to him. An incident somewhat analogous to that just related, but indicating a different and very noble phase of General Lee's character, is told by an officer who was present on the occasion. General Lee was visiting a battery on the lines below Richmond, and the soldiers inspired by their affection for him, gathered near him in a group that attracted the enemy's fire. Turning towards them, he said, in his quiet manner:—

"Men, you had better go farther to the rear; they are firing up here, and you are exposing yourself to unnecessary danger."

The men drew back, but General Lee, as if