

"CHRIST IN YOU."

COL. I. 27.

What remarkable words those are! I have read books in several different languages; but, except as quoted from the Bible, I never met with any like them elsewhere. Who but an inspired writer would venture to use such words: "Christ in you?" They are frequent, however, in different forms in the Bible, and took their rise from the promise of Christ to his disciples: "If a man love me, my Father will love him; and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." And again: "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."

That these words may be understood let me tell two stories. One relates to a person who lived long ago, in the early ages of the church; the other to a man who lived and died a few years back, in the place where the writer lived. The first was a bishop, the second was a pilot.—Both knew the meaning of the words "Christ in you."

The bishop's name was Ignatius, and the church over which he presided was at Antioch. He was well known, and celebrated for his earnest devotedness to the cause of Christ. Little do we know, in our highly favoured days, the trials of those who lived in the times of Ignatius. Those were days of fiery trial and bitter persecution. The Roman emperor Domitian was the first who stretched forth his hand against the church of Christ at Antioch, and his evil example was closely followed by Trajan. Trajan was, indeed, a fierce and fearful persecutor. In the course of a triumphal march at the head of his army he arrived at Antioch. As one of the dearest objects of his ambition was to destroy Christianity, the celebrated Ignatius was speedily brought before the tyrant, and put on trial for his life. There was an expression at that time in use among the Christians, derived, no doubt, from the words before us—"Theophoros," which means "God-bearer," and another, "Christophoros," or "Christ-bearer." It was common for Christians to call themselves by these two names, as expressing the confidence they felt of their union

with their God and Saviour. Ignatius had used this expression while standing before Trajan. The heathen conqueror understood not its meaning. "Who," asked he, "is Christophoros?" "He who carries Christ in his heart," answered the venerable Ignatius. "Dost thou, then, carry Christ in thy heart?" demanded the emperor. "I do," said the faithful servant of a loving Master; "for it is written, 'I will dwell in them, and they in me.'" He then with great fervour, and amidst the impatience of the court, spoke freely to the great Trajan of the ruin of mankind by sin, and of salvation by Christ. He warned the emperor to turn from idols to the worship of the ONE GOD. The conference was very short between the celebrated soldier of the world, and the no less celebrated soldier of the cross. The question was put, "Dost thou, then, carry Christ in thy heart?" and the answer was given, "I do;" and when the exhortation of which I have spoken had been uttered, this sentence was passed upon the prisoner:—"Since Ignatius declares that he carries within himself the man who was crucified, let him be put in bonds, and carried to the great Rome, to be food for the wild beasts, and to make sport for the people."

This sentence was fully carried out.—Ignatius was taken in chains to the great Rome. He was there thrown to the wild beasts, which were kept in dens for such purposes, and by them he was torn piecemeal. His agony is described as being very short. The wild beasts quickly slew and devoured him, and his soul was safe for ever with Him "whom, having not seen, he loved; and in whom, though then he saw him not, yet believing, he rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Yes, for he was *Christophoros*, or Christ-bearer. He who dwelt within him, had used this method to prove the power of his religion, and to call his servant to himself.

Now let us turn from emperors, and bishops, and martyrs of the olden time, to the humble cottage of a pilot on our east seacoast. He was a fine-built man as you ever saw—tall, skillful, and courageous. During the winter, when the northern seas are frozen, he was much at home. I venture to assure you that at such times he was never absent from his seat in church,