

still must he do good, even though he hope for nothing again ; being evil intreated, must only bless, and only bless the more, the more he is evil intreated ; and should the Lord Himself seem to turn his face from him, he must watch unto prayer, must watch—even if his prayer be suffered to return into his own bosom. He only can commit his soul into the hands of the Lord as a faithful Creator, and most merciful Saviour, who commits it in well doing. It is only through patient continuance in well doing that any one may hope for honour and glory and immortality. Though light is often sown for the righteous even here, and joyful gladness for such as are true hearted, yet he who would reap in joy, must be prepared to sow in tears. In any the most promising experience there must needs be much alloy of weariness and of painfulness. Through much tribulation of some kind or other, must we enter into the kingdom of God

Were other cause of sorrow wanting, what a constant source of grief to the well affected mind is that which is found in a sense of manifold infirmities and multiplied short-comings and negligences and ignorances. In working the work of God how sorely are we, the best of us, both let and hindered ! What enemies are we to ourselves, and either to other ! How readily, in how many and various ways, and with what untiring zeal does our great adversary the Devil ply all his wiles against us, if thus to divert us from the work of our salvation. And we—how greedily do we catch at the various pretexts which he offers, and seek from them if haply to excuse ourselves to our own consciences, for remitting a labour which he has known to render distasteful to us ! In view of the many dangers and difficulties which beset his path, the Psalmist was constrained to cry out : “ I had utterly fainted but that I believed verily to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.” And what though we, in this our day, are not exposed to those fiery trials which befel some in an earlier age of the Church, it may be that our danger is only on that account the greater. There is something in persecution mercifully ordered to brace the soul through fervent and devoted prostration before the mercy seat, to a sustained and loftier endurance. There is a virtue in this so painful discipline which causes that men be in suffering more than conquerors ; and hence the Apostle to the Hebrews can thus speak, when exhorting those who were fast relapsing into negligence because the fury of the oppressor had somewhat abated : “ Call to remembrance ” “ the former days in which after ye were illuminated ye endured a great fight of afflictions,” reminding them that they had still