

which is described in the context. The prior history of this apostle brings out clearly before us in their succession the downward dangerous steps by which he had unwittingly been drawing nearer to the little group which now,—engrossed in low-voiced eager conversation,—were gathered around the fire which glowed sullenly in the court-yard of the High Priest's palace. The impulsive disciple has allowed himself once more to be carried far beyond the boundaries of ordinary discretion. We listen, in shocked and silent wonder, to his successive and degrading denials: "I know not the man; I tell you, I do not know him; I swear I NEVER knew him." No, Peter! You intend your words to frame a lie; but unwittingly, you are now speaking the *literal truth*,—you do NOT know Christ! You have companied with Him for years, and *still* you do not know Him! You have not yet fathomed the depths of the well-spring of His love, or the full meaning of those words He so recently addressed to you, *even when He was foretelling this apostacy*: "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." One well-directed glance out of the Saviour's eyes could bring all these things to your remembrance, and change yet more perfectly your obdurate stony heart into a heart of flesh.

While the erring disciple is still speaking, the Saviour and the guard of soldiers who have Him in custody draw near to the place; and, as Christ is hurried by, "the Lord turned and LOOKED upon Peter!" Who shall successfully describe the emotions of the apostle when that look of *reproof* rested upon him,—a look with which was intermingled an element of sorrow that could have cried out for very pain?

We find here one of those occasions for the adequate delineation of which the only competent testimony is the testimony of experience. No one can possibly analyze the feelings of the apostle unless his own breast has felt the upheaval by their resistless power. Alas that EVERY human heart has created the cause, times without number, for the divine rebuke; yet thanks be unto God that in so many instances, the cause having been given, the searching glance of Christ has overborne in a moment all feeble, baseless opposition.

It is not to be lost sight of that a beam of light,—when it comes from the face of Christ, not less than when it breaks away from the surface of the natural sun,—hardens what it fails to soften and