

in particular is not up to any standard at all—its condition is simply a disgrace to us. What we should aim at is to make the Church the very best that our means will allow. The proposed improvements and decoration is easily within the means of our members.

It should not be forgotten, but rather ever borne in mind as a guide to aid us in forming correct ideas on the subject, that the places of worship erected under Divine direction were of great costliness of material, and beauty of ornamentation. Even in the desert, the divine command was for the construction of a Tabernacle of material and workmanship which must excite feelings of wonder, and would indeed be almost incredible considering the time and place, and condition of the people, were it not that we are told that men were divinely inspired with the ability to "devise curious works," and "to work all manner of work" in gold, silver, brass, "cutting of stones," "carving of wood," engraving, embroidery and other textile works, &c., in order that the place where the Lord's honour was to dwell (Ps. xxvi. 8) even temporarily should be made worthy of so exalted a service.

#### WHY?

How often we feel this little word rising in our hearts, if not to our lips! Why does this or that happen to us in the world? Why are we troubled, oppressed, neglected, affronted? Why are enemies allowed to vex us, and friends to forsake us? Why are we so unfortunate, while the wicked flourish like a green bay tree? Why do our good and beloved children fade and die, while the prodigal and the ne'er-do-weel live out their days? Why? -why? why?

Oh, friends, I cannot answer you; I too, have the veil over my eyes: I see darkly too. I can only counsel as I counsel my own faint heart:—"Have faith in the by-and-bye." There is a French

saying that comforts such questioners with a quaint, yet gracious, guess of its own: "*Les pourquoi de la terre seront les alleluias du ciel.*" The Whys of earth will be the Alleluias of heaven. What we marvel at and fret over here may be our crown of rejoicing there.

Ask no more then of your own hearts, or even of your God, the *why* of His dealings with you: patiently wait. He hath surely glorious surprises in store for those who keep silence from all words except "Thy will be done."—*Selected.*

#### THE MANNA AND THE ROD.

In reading the Bible it is curious to notice how one man will find instruction in a verse, which another passes over almost without thought, or at least without interest.

Perhaps we have read that verse in the ninth chapter of the Hebrews, where we are told that, in the Tabernacle of old, there stood, in the Ark of the Covenant, the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded.

The Manna and the Rod! Two strange things to be joined together. Food and punishment.

How many of us have given a thought to this?

Yet is there not something to be learned from it?

Are not both the Manna and the Rod necessary to the children of God while on earth? They could not live without bread; they would not flee sin without the rod.

Nay, even while eating the Father's bread here below, we must not be surprised to see the rod lying on the table near. It must be so on earth. We must expect to eat our bread in tears. But when we sit down with Him at His Table in Heaven, the rod will be thrown into the fire for ever.

Oh, Heavenly Father, teach us patience; let us not murmur at Thy punishments, but accept both Thy Manna and Thy Rod, thankfully! Both are meant for our good.—*Selected.*