

Practical Papers.

THE HIGHER CHRISTIAN LIFE.

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PART I.—WHAT IT IS.

CHAPTER IV.—THE FACTS AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE FACTS.

“Wisdom is justified of all her children.”



IN these sketches and references the first and great fact is that of *full salvation* through *full trust* in Jesus. This fact needs no proof. It is at once the provision and demand of the gospel, and is, of course, the privilege and duty of all. The Apostle Paul lived in it himself, and commended it, and commanded it, to others. The apostles and primitive Christians generally enjoyed it from the day of Pentecost onward. There were exceptions certainly. The Galatians seem to have been turned aside from the fulness and simplicity of the faith. Having begun in the spirit, they thought to be made perfect by works, and the apostle wrote them with all plainness and urgency of speech to induce them to look to Christ and Christ alone for holiness, telling them that he *travailed in birth for them again*, until Christ should be formed in them the hope of glory. And there were other churches besides those of Galatia where, through the blindness of unbelief, they failed of the fulness of God. But, as a general thing, we hear only of the same life of faith in its fulness, and fulness of joy in all, until after the death of all the apostles, save John, and he exiled from the churches and shut up in the lone Isle of Patmos. Then, when the apostles were gone, and the days of miracles were ended, and inspired teaching ceased in the churches, and Satan began to be loosed,—then, in the epistles of him who walks in glory amidst the golden candlesticks, we have the first intimation that the light of the candles was beginning to grow dim.

And surely Luther and Baxter, Wesley and D'Aubigne, full and rich as their experience of grace and salvation was, had not outstripped Peter and John, Paul and Apollós! Neither have the Lutherans, as we have named them, or the Wesleyans, or Oberlinians, got beyond primitive Christians! Nay, if we shall carry the comparison back to the bright cloud of witnesses, who passed off before Christ's coming upon earth, as they are called up in array before us in the beautiful citation by the apostle in the eleventh of Hebrews, we shall hardly find the brightest of moderns outstripping these worthies of old, either in fulness of faith, or fulness of salvation. Going about, therefore, to prove that there is such an experience would be but a fool's work! If any