

frosty winds, (in whose terrible cold, who can live?) driving the snow through every crack and crevice of our dwellings, and piling up the huge drifts across lanes, bye-ways, high-ways, and railways. There is probably not one now hearing me but have seen, and felt, and shivered in one of these storms of pitiless cold and ceaseless drift, that have made this winter a very memorable one in Europe as well as in America.

It would be strange indeed had the Bible (which is the most human, matter-of-fact book in the world, as well as the most poetical, spiritual, and divine) omitted storms from its notice. With a pen which is master of every subject it touches, the Bible pictures to our imaginations, in a few bold strokes, every variety and degree of storm and tempest. Is it a storm of rain? Listen—"The same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken open, and the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights." Is it a storm of fire? Listen—"And the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from heaven, and he overthrew the cities and all the plains." Is it a storm of hail? Listen—"The hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt, all that was in the field both man and beast, and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field." But time would fail us to follow this matter further than to refer to the 29th Psalm for a description of a storm among the mountains of Lebanon, which is remarkable not less for the awful grandeur of its diction, lost largely, of course, in translation, than for the sweetness of its closing words—"The Lord will bless his people with peace."

#### I.—THE STORM.

These storms in the natural world are however, but pictures and types of moral and spiritual things. There

are storms that shake and shatter the shelters of the soul, as effectually as the storms that beat and batter on our clay dwellings. If the Bible speaks much of the storms of the natural world, it speaks more, much more, of the storms of the spiritual world whose issues extend into eternity.

There are two storms, spiritual in their character and consequences, that receive great prominence in the word of God.

1st. There is a storm of God's wrath against sinners. Let us explain the meaning of the word storm in this connection. When the judge passes sentence on a criminal, handing him over to the officers of the law for execution, the words of the judge may be low, his voice husky with feeling, and yet these awful words bring down on the head, and heart, and home of the condemned man, darkness thicker, and horrors more terrible than accompanies the fiercest of earthly tempests. Such a storm of wrath and condemnation came down on man when he sinned his first sin. The time of day when the criminal was arraigned was the cool of the evening; the voice that spoke was full of sorrow, but the sentence passed was severe as became the awful offence. The doom of the serpent in all its depth is to us incomprehensible; the doom of the woman we see in her degraded condition in every country under the sun into which Christ has not come; and the doom of man is only faintly imaged in the accursed soil which gives him reluctant bread, and in the grave which never yet has said "it is enough." That storm of condemnation is beating every day and every hour against the sides and the roof, and the window of the soul of every child of Adam in a state of nature. "God is angry with the wicked every day." There is no peace, saith the Lord, to the wicked. The reality of this storm, and the miserable conse-