

though we cultivate the corn in our fields, Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God, as well we know, must give the increase. And why then are ye anxious for your living, what ye shall eat or what ye shall put on? Is not the life more than meat, the body than raiment? In patience possess ye your souls, in faith cast all your burden upon the Lord, in simple diligence do your daily work, knowing that He who gave the greater gift, your life, will also give the daily bread wherewith it shall be sustained. In the coming year our God shall supply this your need.

Our next great natural need is protection.

"Except the Lord do build the house,  
They labor in vain that build;  
Except the Lord the city keep,  
The watchman waketh, but in vain."

God's protecting care! how great is our need of this! Mirza's vision of the mystic bridge of human life, with its trap-doors and its Harpies, is true in point of fact, though there is no chance-work in the dropping of the gates. Here, too, we are often hard of heart and dull of brain to recognize our indebtedness. At times we realize our need, and Martyrdom gives expression, O how fit! to our feelings as we sing,

"Our God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast,  
And our eternal home."

But how often do we say, "All is well, O soul, take thine ease!" The gift, to our eyes, is greater than the giver, and we see Him not. Out of His very faithfulness arises our forgetfulness.

He protects, as He feeds us, by natural law, yet His protection is none the less real because not miraculous. Just as in respect of the former need, God seldom gave manna in the wilderness, seldom turned water into wine, yet ever gives sustenance in His own appointed way, so also, though He has seldom sent His angel to close the mouths of lions, seldom filled the mountain with chariots and horses of fire round