

THE ARK OF SAFETY.

Some weeks ago, while on board a vessel off the east coast of Maine, and the night coming on, the storm which had been threatening for hours gathered around us with the gathering darkness. Our vessel being somewhat frail, and altogether unequal to an ocean storm, the captain wisely determined to seek shelter among the many islands which lie along the coast, so entering a sheltered inlet, we cast anchor for the night. Lying at anchor while on a sea voyage is perhaps one of the most severe tests of human patience, and yet however heavily the time lay upon our hands, as we looked out upon the dark angry waters and heard the wind and rain beating pitilessly against the windows of the cabin, we felt grateful that we were for the time at least free from danger. As the hours passed the storm increased in fury, when, as the midnight hour approached, a little bird was seen to enter one of the open fanlights and fly around the cabin. It appeared much affrighted at first, its wings and feathers ruffled and drenched with the rain; but soon gathering confidence it settled down near one of the lights and closed its eyes in peaceful slumbers, utterly oblivious of the surrounding storm. It had entered an ark of safety and found the needed shelter and rest. Looking at that little bird in its restful security I thought of the human soul, and of Jesus who is the true ark of safety. Human lives daily and hourly are being wafted off the shores of time, out upon the fathomless deep of the eternal world, their eyes often closed to the signals of danger, and their ears deaf to the warning voices, sometimes ignorantly, sometimes presumptuously, go down never to rise again from the midnight darkness. Our heavenly Father would not have it so; he has "no delight in the death of a sinner, but would that all might come unto him and live." Jesus came not only to be the ark of safety, waiting on the shores of time to carry his people over the stormy sea, but he would be here as a friend and companion with them, as a Saviour from the perils attending their footsteps, guarding, and fitting them in the present for the glories of the future.

Reader, have you secured this friend and companion? Are you trusting in this Saviour? Have you found a place in this ark of safety? Life in the present, even, is much like a stormy sea. There are the hours of midnight darkness when we know not where to turn our weary footsteps, and the tempests, at times, too overpowering for frail fallen humanity. We often need an ark of safety, a place of shelter and rest to which we can flee and hide ourselves until the storms of temptations be overpast. We need an omnipotent arm on which to lean, and upon which we may rest our heavy burdens. The wearied, restless, fluttering soul may find all of this in the Saviour; nay, human language and figure fail to present all the wealth of helpfulness, and comfort, and companionship, and salvation that there is found in him whose name is Emmanuel—*God with us.*

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

J. T.

As Noah's dove found no footing, but in the ark; so a Christian finds no contentment but in Christ.