

we be at a throne of grace, travailing as in birth, that Christ may be found in them the hope of glory.

If the death of young children is in these ways specially fitted to secure the spiritual welfare of others, as well as generally in the same manner as all affliction, may not survivors say : " it is well."

In the present case, however, a peculiarity of the event is, that it is in the family of a minister. This is a view, which has several important consequences leading us to the same conclusion. The servants of God have been in every age like their master, and like the meanest of his followers, subject to suffering. One design of this is, doubtless, their own spiritual good. They are men of like passions with others. They have the same evil heart by nature. They are the subjects of the same work of grace, and in carrying it on, God employs the same means as with the humble Christian. For the subduing of their corruptions God sees the same discipline necessary. And indeed from the very frequency of their handling spiritual subjects, they are in danger of getting into the habit of treating them in a *professional* manner, and not as matters in which they have a deep *present* interest. Thus while made keepers of the vineyard of others, they are in danger of not keeping their own vineyard. To avoid this, they are chastened with pain,—and thus being made to feel the importance of divine things practically, their growth in grace is promoted, and they increase in meetness both for the service and the enjoyment of God.

But ministers are visited with affliction for special reasons connected with their work. It is intended to *enlarge their christian experience*, and thus to make them more useful in their work. Diligent study, particularly the study of God's word, is absolutely necessary to fit them for their work, and will do much to make them "workmen that need not be ashamed." But it is not sufficient to be thoroughly furnished unto every good work : the minister of religion must learn Christianity by experience. He must know from his own heart the workings of natural corruption and the struggles of grace,—the trials by which the Christian is