

And this resemblance between the Lord's dealings at one time and at another may be traced, not only in the wisdom that guides, and the holiness that pervades, but also in the mystery that envelops them. He ordereth all things wisely, and doeth all things well; but "clouds and darkness are often round about His throne."* "His path is in the deep waters, and his footsteps are not known."†

And the mystery which thus envelops many of the Lord's dealings with His creatures, and hides *the reason* of His dispensations from our view, even when the presence of His hand is plain enough, seems peculiarly to screen the future from our curious gaze. The events that come, and the reasons that shall prompt them, and the object they shall have in view, and the purpose they shall answer;—who can pretend to spread these out before us, and declare to us the counsel of the Most High?

And yet it is our privilege, as rational and immortal beings, to look forward. As much as it is our duty, as responsible beings, to look upon the past, to trace the dealings of the Lord's hand in all that has befallen us, and to examine the improvement we have made of the various dispensations, by which He has appealed to us; so is it our privilege and our duty to

* Ps. xcvii. 2.

† Ps. lxxvii. 19.