

experience has been, "to depart and be with Christ is far better," and during our painful sickness the desire to be free from all pain somewhat increased the superlative nature of *far better*, that is all. If the verdict of the doctor had been at any time, "only a few hours to live," it would have been accepted as good news, not only because of present pain, but because our faith in Christianity was a living reality. This faith, we remark here, was not built on the dogmatic arguments of dogmatic theology, but chiefly on the fact of Christ's ability, through the Holy Ghost given to us to enable us to live a righteous life during the past years.

There was no one time when this faith was stronger than another, nor were there any precious reasons of glad realization contrasting with a less exalted experience. We presume the son of an earthly king has a uniform faith in the fact of his relationship to the reigning sovereign, and this his faith can only vary if some proofs are brought to his notice which would throw doubt on the legitimacy of his birth. Hence, we suspect that the thrilling accounts of alternate ecstasy and depression, of spiritual conflict and victory, so indigenous to modern sick-room experiences, have become a thing of the past in the experience of him who really walks in the Spirit.

Again, we were harrassed by no fears that our faith would fail, or that we would lack any good thing, and so were not once exercised by any desire to send a request for prayer to any individual Christian or company of Christians. We were conscious of no prejudice against such a course, and feel positive we would not have hesitated to adopt it if the sense of personal need in any direction had been realized, and it had appeared right so to do.

**PAIN, GOD'S GIFT.**—During the first night of intense pain we were so placed as to be beyond the reach of any relief from medicine, and so had to endure, through long hours, unadulterated torture of the body. In the middle of this watch-night of suffering, the Master came to us walking on the billows, and talked to us, saying that He Himself it

was who thus tortured our body, and it was ours to take in this thought still more positively, and yet to know, along with this serious fact, that He also loved us with an infinite love, a love beyond the power of language to utter. What was our knowledge or our mental powers that we should comprehend God in this double attitude? Could we leap through infinite space and intelligently understand the needs-be of the universe, and then come to the positive conclusion that God could have made the worlds with their teeming populations and left out all suffering? True faith in God accepted the fact, that, even before the reign of man in this or any other world, when suffering abounded, one animal devouring another, and, in fact, inflicting torture upon his fellow, that God exhibited there both His power and His love. What though we shrank from our part of necessary suffering even as Christ did from His? What though the apparent puzzle was beyond apprehension as regarded our finite mind? Faith could and must take in the fact, and so we could intelligently adore our loving Saviour, even when He stood before us, without disguise, connecting our fierce pain of body intimately with His handiwork.

Did the pain cease when we realized this fact in its full significance? No. It went on as heretofore and only stopped when seemingly it had spent itself. There was no miracle, in the ordinary meaning of that word, in its subsidence.

The following day we were considerably exercised by the thought that possibly our guide would require us to avoid all human efforts to lessen pain and secure sleep during the next and following nights. Now, whilst we knew that we would have been loyal to Him in this thing, even to the enduring of many a succeeding night of pain, we were none the less pleased when we received direct instructions to accept and use the opiates prescribed by our medical adviser, which thing we did to the avoidance, no doubt, of much additional torture. However, other complications of our illness set in, at different times, which were the means of much suffering, and beyond the reach of medicine.