

of this law having been acted on. But Gideon, by the Divine command is made to honour it ; when not fewer than twenty-two thousand men take their departure,—thus, virtually confessing themselves to be cowards.—(vii. 3.) Strange to say, though less than a third of the original number continues with him, God makes the same objection to these, and they must undergo a still farther reduction, that all men might see and know that the victory, and the glory of Israel's deliverance belonged to God alone. By what may be viewed as almost an arbitrary test, the ten thousand are reduced to three hundred :—this number having, when the whole army was brought to a stream to drink, quenched their thirst by lapping the water with their hands, while the rest of their companions in arms, for the sake as it would seem of taking a larger draught, kneeled down on their knees. This small party having thus proved themselves to be the most patient of thirst, may be regarded as having been the very *elite* of the Israelitish army, and by them, with Gideon for a commander, the Lord was to deliver his people from the countless hosts of Midian. The narrative of the inspired historian to which we need not now more particularly refer, informs us, that this handful of men, by relying on the encouragements, and following the directions which God himself gave them, were completely victorious, so that the rest of their countrymen were summoned out to pursue and destroy, and divide the spoil. The watchword of the Israelites in the fight, if it may be said to have been a fight, was a fit indication of the way in which the victory was achieved :—THE SWORD OF JEHOVAH AND OF GIDEON.—(vii. 20.)

This incident, my hearers, is no doubt one of the ensamples or types to which the Apostle refers, and it suggests important lessons respecting the mode of the Divine procedure in the advancement of His Kingdom in the world, and the duty of all those whom he admits to a co-operation with himself in establishing it.

I would at present, in humble dependance on the Divine blessing, invite your attention to the following considerations: