

bread," both earthly and heavenly, while our brethren are left by us, comparatively unheeded, in earthly trouble and spiritual destitution, are the dishonourable peculiarities of the Church in this "enlightened age."

And, my brethren, it was when fastings and alms deeds were thus "the wings of prayer," that Christians found that pride, passion, lust, avarice, and all "this kind" of devils did "go forth." They also knew by blessed experience that "God will be no man's debtor;" but that for every self-denying offering they gave to Him and His poor, He returned them in this life a hundred fold; and already in Paradise have they a blessed foretaste of the infinite benefit they will derive, in the day of His coming, from having here "made friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." Their fastings, prayers, and alms are now found, like those of Cornelius, to be no mean "memorials before God!"

Alas! for the self-indulgence and self-seeking of modern Christianity!

Such, my brethren, we find to have been the holy confidence which apostolic and early Christians, yea, and our fathers also, had in the faithfulness of the promises which Jesus had made to His elect that He and the Holy Spirit will continually dwell in His Church and manifest themselves through her ordinances to the faithful. And need we wonder, brethren, knowing the covenant truth of our heavenly Father, that, in fulfilment of His own promise, "It was done unto them according to their faith." *They diligently sought for Christ and His Spirit where they had promised to be found, and the consequence was, that "they grew in grace daily and in the knowledge of Christ Jesus their Lord."* This then is the secret of the members of the Church in those days, being so much holier than in these later times!

You will perhaps think that we have unduly exalted the Church, her priesthood, and her ordinances; but not so: it is God, not we, that has "put such treasure into earthen vessels;" and He has even condescended to give us His reason for doing so, even that "the honor may be all of God and not of man;" since by using such mean and apparently inefficient agents, he shows how entirely the grace and power come directly from Himself, and in no wise rest in any degree, inherently in the agents whom