

is indeed hard to imagine. The mind of man, formed as it is to be more tenacious of its active habits, than even of its moral dispositions, is, in the present state, trained often at an immense cost of suffering, to the exercise of skill, of forethought, of courage, of patience; and ought it not to be inferred—unless positive evidence contradicts the supposition—that this system of education bears some relation of fitness to the state for which it is an initiation? Shall not the very same qualities, which here are so sedulously fashioned and finished, be actually needed and used in that future world of perfection? Surely the idea is inadmissible, that an instrument wrought up at so much expense, to a polished fitness for service, is destined to be suspended for ever on the palace walls of heaven, as a glittering bauble, no more to make proof of its temper?

Perhaps a pious, but needless jealousy, lest the honour due to Him, “who worketh all in all,” should be in any degree compromised, has had influence in concealing from the eyes of Christians the importance attributed in the Scriptures to subordinate agency; and thus, by a natural consequence, has impoverished and enfeebled our ideas of the heavenly state. But, assuredly, it is only while encompassed by the dimness and errors of the present life, that there can be any danger of attributing to the creature the glory due to the Creator.—When once with open eyes that excellent glory has been contemplated, then shall it be understood that the divine wisdom is incomparably more honoured by the skilful and faithful performances and by the cheerful toils of agents who have been fashioned and fitted for service, than it could be by the bare exertions of irresistible power; and then, when the absolute dependence of creatures is thoroughly felt, may the beautiful orders of the heavenly hierarchy, rising and still rising toward perfection, be seen and admired, without hazard of forgetting Him, who alone is absolutely perfect, and who is the only fountain and first cause of whatever is excellent.—*Isaac Taylor.*

#### SPECIAL PROVIDENCES.

No doctrine of the Bible is more clearly taught and more precious than that of the special providence of God. His care and government over us, and over

all things around us, extends to the minutest particulars. He numbers the hairs of our heads, and notes the fall of every sparrow. The practical scepticism of Christians in this respect is wonderful and most criminal. By it they grieve and dishonour their heavenly Father—by it they bring darkness and sorrow on their hearts. We should strive earnestly to rid ourselves of such an atheistic mode of life and habit of thought. We should accustom ourselves to see God in every thing—to seek wisdom and aid from him in every emergency, and to expect to receive it. This filial confidence he will approve of and bless. And looking for special providences, we shall find them surrounding our daily pathway, and making it bright, as renewed evidences of parental love gladden the life of a child.

To a stranger, the petty troubles or joys of a child might seem small indeed; but to the father and mother they are matters of interest, because they affect the happiness and help to mould the character of their off-spring. So the Christian's daily trials or blessings are important in the sight of God, because they affect not only the present condition of one who is dear to him, but the preparation of the spirit for glory. These petty and ever recurring events are like the patient chiselling of the sculptor—on them, rather than on the great blows of the hammer, depends the perfection of the statue. Let, then, the Christian realize his intimate relation to God, and the great object of his present probationary state, and he will feel that not to expect special providences is to repudiate his sonship—is to doubt his Father's omnipresence and love.

#### THE MARCH OF PROVIDENCE.

So the Almighty Providence, which never sleeps, draws his children on.—And where he draws, it is no aimless movement. We see but the surface—or only margins and glimpses of the mighty plain. All the revolutions of our latest times are only the breaking crests of a wave of light that has been rolling on ever since God divided the ocean from the land, the morning from the night. The world is not a self-impelled caprice. History is not a tangled skein. Civilization is not scattered by chance, but grows by law. We call single events, or lordly men, the cause of great epochs.