

up housekeeping. And all that, you see, came of the servants taking the advice of the blessed Virgin, and doing what she bid them. Now, if she was here among us this day, she would give just the same advice to every one of us: 'Whatsoever He saith unto you do it.' And now I'll tell you some of the things He says to us: 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate.' So the preacher got leave to finish his discourse, with not a little of good effect. On another occasion a furious mob of roughs came near, bent on mischief. Mr. Ouseley immediately, with a loud voice, addressed those nearest him: "Make way for the gentlemen"; and then, with perfect courtesy of manner, looking at the surprised roughs, he said, "Come forward, gentlemen; I want to speak to you on important business." Their leader hushed them to quiet, and quite respectfully approached the preacher. "You know Father O'Shaughnessy, the parish priest?" "Yes, your reverence." "Will you carry a message to him for me?" "To be sure, your reverence." "Well, take Gideon Ouseley's compliments to the reverend father, and ask him, Can he make a fly?—not the fly that they put on the fishing hook, but one of those little things buzzing about our ears." "It's no use, your reverence," said two or three at once; "shure, we know he couldn't." "What! is it Father O'Shaughnessy, the parish priest, cannot make one of these little flies?" "Och, and shure he could do nothing of the kind," several voices good-humouredly shouted. "Ah, then, gentlemen, if you're sure he couldn't make a little fly out of a bit of clay, how could he make the blessed Saviour out of a bit of bread?" "True for your reverence," said several, gravely.

ISRAEL'S IRON AGE.

THE above is the title of an exceedingly interesting and useful work, the third edition of which has just been issued by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton. The author, Dr. Marcus Dods, has chosen a grand subject, and has grandly rendered it. The judges, with their stern, uncompromising fealty to their God and their country, are graphically portrayed, and lessons and arguments of the most convincing nature are presented to the thoughtful student. The following passage, which closes the chapter of Joshua, is a fair specimen of the author's style, and will, we think, be acceptable to our readers:—

We see in the conquest of Canaan to which Israel was led by Joshua, in what sense, and to what extent, we should look for present victory over sin. Joshua did not deal only in promises. He said, there are your foes, let us slay them. He would have been hooted out of his command had he not given actual victory. Promises would have been counted mere evasions. And no one who is in earnest about sin will be put off with mere expectations of deliverance. Sin is as much sin now as ever it can be in the future. If it is wrong to sin in the world to come it is wrong to sin now. Sin, if hateful to God, must be as hateful now as ever it can be. If God is in earnest about delivering me from sin, He will deliver me now; and if I am in earnest about being delivered, no expectation of future deliverance can compensate for the misery of present bondage. The Saviour I need is one who can help me to-day, one who counts my present enemies His enemies, and who can communicate to me such real strength as shall make the difference between my being defeated and my conquering them. If He merely promises to take me out from among my foes, if He merely says I shall be rid of them when I die, is that to be called victory? Certainly not; and it is not such victory Christ offers. But many perhaps may say, I would it were so; that Christ gave present victory, that His saving from sin meant my being saved from those sins I am in bondage to, those only sins it concerns me to be saved from. I would it were so. This were a salvation to be prized, by which I myself could now become a better, holier, more useful man. But I have sought such salvation long; I may not be much in earnest about anything, but I have spent more earnestness in seeking such salvation than in any other pursuit; and I cannot see that I have found it. Theoretically, nothing seems grander and more satisfactory than this salvation by Christ. Practically, it fails me at every point.

It is useless to give the lie to experience; and it were untrue to say that yours is a singular case, or that you ought to expect greater things. For when conquest of present sins is promised, you are not to expect immediate victory. You will not have any victory if you do not engage in immediate

warfare. But read the history of Israel, and what do you find? That they held their land at immense cost of life and treasure; that no bloodier battles are on record than those in which they had to engage with their old foes. They were successful, they did hold their land, but never found it much easier than at the first. So when you fall into sin that makes you doubt whether Christ is a present Saviour, there is really nothing else to say than this: You must win back again the ground you have lost. Of course it is weary work, heart-breaking, humbling, tormenting work—a trial to faith so dreadful that many a soul has broken down under it; yet what is to be done? Are you to yield to sin? are you to live on contentedly with that in you which you know is working death? are you to disbelieve Jesus Christ and live at a distance from God, unable to bring your state of heart into the light of His countenance? Rather than this, will you not endure all things, making each relapse into sin the occasion of doing something more to guard against its recurrence, and of praying to God more and not less earnestly? You know that you must make way if you do so. Your sins may be so strongly rooted in your nature that you see before you a lifetime of struggle; but so is it with many. Even when you lie stiff and unconscionable on the field of battle, you may be of the winning party. As he who died in the moment of victory, his eye already dim so that he could not see whether it was the ranks of friend or foe that were breaking, so do most Christians die, sword in hand, not having had much time to erect trophies and sing hymns of victory, and see all the fruit of their warfare, but not the less certainly having obtained eternal victory over the sins they knew and fought against in this present life.

NOT WILLINGLY.

There is strong consolation in these words of the weeping prophet, "He doth not afflict willingly."

The word translated "willingly" means "from his heart." "He doth not afflict from his heart," but only and always from his hand. When his hand is lifted up against us, his heart is yearning over us with unspeakable tenderness. When Joseph "made himself strange" unto his brethren, and "spoke roughly" to them, his heart said, "O my brothers!" So when God makes himself strange to us in the disguise of some dark providence, when he speaks roughly to us, his heart is overflowing with more than a mother's tenderness. When he says, "Hear ye the rod," his heart says, "How can I give thee up?"

And if we are His, can we not kiss the rod? When it falls upon us all we shall surely see our Father's hand at the other end of it. It is not then wielded by a tyrant, nor is it an iron rod; neither is it a dead bramble, but rather a living rose branch. Like Aaron's rod it buds and blossoms, and bears fruit—"the peaceable fruits of righteousness."

Are we passing under the rod to-day? Behold how the smiting shakes off the precious fruits! And what a beautiful variety there is, and all from one branch! There is everlasting love, and sweet peace, and meek patience, and perfect submission, and holy joy, and abiding hope, but we forbear. Time would fail us to count up all the precious fruits of our Father's rod.

We are exhorted to "hear the rod," but we should use our ears as well as our eyes, and look when we hear, that we may see where the fruit falls, and may gather it up and eat it, that it may be unto us the joy and rejoicing of our hearts. Let us take all our trials as love-tokens, for surely in kindness only are they sent. God does not afflict willingly. He sees the "need be," though we may not. Let us then be patient and prayerful unto the rod.—*Illustrated Weekly.*

A teacher wishing to explain to a little girl the manner in which a lobster casts its shell when it has outgrown it, said: "What do you do when you have outgrown your clothes? You throw them aside, don't you?" "O no!" replied the little one; "mamma lets out the tucks!"

How TO RESTORE A FALLEN BROTHER.—You are in the boat; he has fallen overboard into the water. Therefore, don't push him with the oar, for he will only go farther from you, or sink to rise no more. Rather sail round him, enclose him in the Gospel net; or take him up in your hands, and lift him into the boat, and speak kindly and comfortably to him, and remember that by so doing you will hide a multitude of sins.