

EDIFICATION.

"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." (Rom. xiv. 19).

"Let all things be done unto edifying." (1 Cor. xiv. 26).

IN selecting a subject and choosing a text for a New Year's sermon a great deal has to be considered. These are occasions when hearts seem especially open to impressions. Indeed, it would be strange, were it otherwise, when everything seen and heard in Church presents the most affecting of all themes to eye and heart, the mercy and love of God to sinners—that mercy and love shown most wondrously in *God Himself coming to earth* to be a Brother, a Babe, One of ourselves, and so to draw us to and unite us to Himself by the tie of a Common Humanity. This must touch all our hearts. Add to this that we are spared to see another epoch of time, brought safely through the changes and chances, the sorrows and joys, of a whole year. Then a new and a very impressive motive of gratitude still further opens our hearts to receive the message that He may put it into His minister's mind to deliver. And as we meet together on the first Lord's Day of the new year, a faithful priest will endeavour to plant in the prepared soil of his people's souls, such seed as will be likely to take root and bear fruit most to their own advantage, and to the glory of God.

Now, my dear brethren, for some time past I have had little doubt as to the *Subject* I should like to present to you as most profitable to-day. But when I came to the Text, I hesitated between that verse of S. Paul in his letter to the Romans, and that in his first letter to the Corinthians. One was longer than the other. That other was more epigrammatic, more likely to be remembered as our watchword or motto for 1876. Yet the longer verse conveyed a good deal more of what I wished