

in variety—all in themselves inimical to our interest and Christian progress—yet let us be thankful—there is no difficulty with Christ.

“All needful grace will he bestow,
And crown that grace with glory too.”

Nor are there any difficulties within us—or in the world around us but what may be overcome—but it must be

“Our sole concern, our single care,
To watch, and tremble, and prepare.”

Have we found it an easy matter hitherto? Had we no difficulty in our struggle to put off the old man with his deeds—to find our way to the cross? Has it cost us no labour to submit to the discipline of salvation—to train the spirit, the habits—the emotions, and make them tributary to the advancement of righteousness—to eliminate by divine grace those impurities and that admixture of worldliness which we found to be so obstructive to Christian progress? Have we found no embarrassment in our endeavours to purify our hearts by faith—to bring its living active power into the conscience that it might be purified from dead works to serve the living God? Were no exertions required to overcome the repulsiveness of our old nature to a life of faith—such a life as continually apprehends Christ as a living divine personality—the life of the soul, and the motive, and end of all action?

Has it been easy for us to bring out our moral convictions in opposition to the current conventionalities of our circle—to feel a ready sensibility of sin and a quick perception of its incongruity with a life of salvation?

Out in the world of business—in the midst of outward exposure of work of toil—of duty have we no struggle to keep our heart wound up to our duty of “glorifying God in our body and in our spirit which are God’s”—when gladdened with successes, or depressed with reverses—when suffering from excessive anxieties and cares, do we feel no conflict within to keep the mind up to its task, to maintain our spirituality and our hold upon Christ? Those engaged in business who aim at being strictly conscientious have their difficulties greatly increased by the dishonest practices of others; from this source arise many temptations, rendering it necessary to watch continually, to pray earnestly, that the selfishness which is inherent in our nature does not get the mastery over us—and by the appearance of impunity, lead us to swerve from that rectitude which becometh a righteous man. How have we to guard against the spirit of envy at the success of others, and to cultivate the grace of contentment with the place and position which providence has assigned us, and in it “maintain a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man.”

Then there are the difficulties arising from our natural love of pleasure—appearances—the world,—to overcome them will cost many a struggle, many a sigh, many a tear. Then, aided by the influence of our great adversary; form a barrier to our salvation which only faith, strong faith, can overcome. We shall find we have found his devices suited to our constitutional temperament, to our natural ambition, to our dreams of honour and riches, most deceptive and dangerous in times of trial, of care and exigency,