

only, time in Protestantism, it was formally declared not to be the essence of faith." Wesley: "With regard to the assurance of faith, I apprehend that the whole Christian Church in the first centuries enjoyed it. And I conceive that all the Reformed Churches in Europe once believed it." . . . "I allow (1) that there is an explicit assurance of pardon; (2) that it is the common privilege of real Christians; (3) that it is the proper *Christian* faith which *purifieth the heart*."

This doctrine is much abused. There are those who profess assurance who disobey God's commandments. John teaches, with searching emphasis, that only the obedient are the true children of God, and with him all other Scripture writers agree. There are those who profess the witness of the Spirit, who are selfish, intolerant, censorious, arrogant or egotistic. Their profession belies the Scriptures. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." He who has the Spirit of Christ is gentle, modest, consistent, and winsome.

There are those who have the witness who will not confess it until they experience certain strong emotions of joy and rapture, or are overwhelmed by some undefinable and fruitless ecstasy. All this is also contrary to the Scripture. There is a still, small voice that whispers in our hearts and brings an assurance as definite and clear as could be imparted by a cyclone of spiritual power.

Let us pray for the witness of the Spirit, and so order our faith and our life that we shall receive it. Receiving it, in whatever form, let us acknowledge it, and utilize it in all that pertains to a pure heart and a holy life.—*Western Christian Advocate*.

TERRIBLE STATE OF THINGS.

Yes, I confess that is a terrible state of things. It is said that troubles never come single handed, but it is a rare thing for them to pile up in this sort of style.

The clothes-line has broken, and the clothes, only half dried, are down in the dust in the yard. Company has come, and it seems impossible to find time to

entertain them. The child is sick, and needs special attention. While attending to the child the fire has gone out. Charley has come in, in his rollicking style, and has knocked the stove-pipe down. But, worse and worse, to my surprise the servant has just come downstairs with her things all packed, and she tells me she is going to leave.

Well, now, do you mean to tell me, that with such surroundings your soul is kept in perfect peace? I am afraid some of our good housekeepers will question your testimony. All true Christians believe *theoretically* that the grace of God can keep us under all circumstances; but when it comes to a matter of actual experience, they are not ready to accept a testimony of this kind.

God's word is plain enough. He promises to "keep in perfect peace," but, strange to say, when God does just what He promises to do, it is a matter of surprise, and even of unbelief.

Who would claim that God is lacking either in the *will* or the *ability* to keep under such trials as these? If He has both the will and the ability, and we comply fully with the conditions on which He promises to keep us in perfect peace, then why should any one doubt such a blessed testimony? True, it requires wonderful grace, but God has wonderful grace in His storehouse, which he gives to all who comply with the conditions.—*Sel.*

TRY YOUR WINGS.

John McNeill tells us of a friend of his who owned an eagle which he had captured when young. He had raised it as far as possible like a domestic fowl. By-and-by he was compelled to sell all his possessions, to go to the other side of the world. What should he do with his eagle now? He did not like to give it away, and could not bring himself to sell it to a stranger. He conceived the happy thought of giving it back to itself—he would set it free!

He opened the enclosure where it had been kept, and brought the bird out to the back green. It walked about; this seemed like a rather larger place than