

its lessons to the afflicted, to the wicked, and to the bystander; its banquet for the poet and the divine; the charm of its antiquity, and the ever-new freshness of its teachings. We compare it, for its numerous helps, defences, and weapons, to an armoury of heaven; or for its treasures of poetry and theology to the mysterious Tree of Life, on which were twelve manner of fruits, and whose very leaves were for the healing of the nations. But this Book—the oldest in the Bible—stands not alone in its beauty and beneficence, as once it stood. Like the parent trunk of the Indian forest tree, it has become surrounded by many another kindred stem, distinctly rooted but united in essence: another, yet the same. Posterity has sung and rested beneath its foliage, and fed upon its fruit; and, as succeeding generations became more numerous, it spread forth its great branches to give them shade and shelter until its growth was complete, and its comprehensive embrace is sufficient to protect a world. Curious men have thought that they discovered gnarled knots on the stately stem of our English Bible, and gladly would they apply to it the axe of their clumsy criticism; but may we not bid them in your name to “Spare the tree—touch not a single bough”? The light the Book affords is only dim, but it is just such as is suited to our feeble vision; and, though we cannot yet gaze full upon the Glorious Sun walking in His dazzling brightness, yet with the darkest shadows of time is mingled the light of the coming day—of that day, for which, if faithful, we are preparing—and to which, whether faithful or not, we are hastening. For “the night is far spent.” Already the

“Dawn of another life breaks over our earthly horizon,

As o’er the Eastern sky the first grey streaks of the morning.”

“Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face.” As we gaze upon the starry night, we view the brilliancy of the lamps of heaven, but their courses are to us incomprehensible: we know not why here they are thickly sown, and there thinly scattered, or why one star differeth from another star in glory; but, could we climb the hills of heaven, we might, from that centre point of the universe, behold the

map of creation in beauteous order, and complete regularity, spread around the throne of the Eternal:—so, we trust, that one day will give us an insight into the dealings of God’s providence; and all that, in time, is broken, disjointed, and harsh to the eye of the scorner, and to the wisest and best is deeply mysterious—will then appear to our glorified vision clear, harmonious and simple, in the golden sunlight of eternity. We look upon that wondrous clustering of stars that forms the milky way; and, as we regard each star as the centre of a system, we are overwhelmed with the conception of so many orbs, all moving agreeably to law, and circling their respective courses for ages without confusion; but still more astonishing, and still more glorious, will it be, when at the last it shall appear, that of the millions of the human race, each has been the free originator of thoughts, volitions, and deeds; that these have flowed from each in a perpetual stream; that they have conflicted with one another, and conflicted with the revealed will of God; that, nevertheless, all have been woven together in the beautiful tissues of the providential government of the Almighty, and, “all things have worked together for good to them that love God.”

Then shall they sing in heaven the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb: “Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, thou King of Saints.”

IN CHRIST JESUS.

“But now in Christ Jesus, ye who were sometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.”—Eph. ii. 13.

If one were asked, Do you live near the court? have you free access of his majesty? did you ever kiss the king’s hand? who would hesitate one moment for an answer? Consciousness would instantly dictate one. Pray, is Christian experience so dark and doubtful a matter, that if asked, Are you brought nigh to God? do you live near to God? have you free access to God? that we cannot answer with some degree of knowledge and certainty? Oh, my dear fellow-Christians, though we are brought nigh to God, yet we do not live near Him. Hence