

days on earth were spent in poverty ; yet this never made him selfish : he was always bountiful, and through his poverty many were made rich. Let him be our example in all things, and especially in his unselfish care for others and his ceaseless longing for their welfare.

Hard times should draw us nearer to God. The affectionate child nestles in the parental bosom all the closer for the frown or the word of rebuke which expresses disapproval of childish error. So when God frowns on us in his providence let us cling closer to him, walk more carefully in his statutes, and cherish more fondly his love in our hearts.

Hard times should enlarge our hearts, even as the darkness of night widens the sphere of our vision. Experience is the only successful teacher in life. We can never sympathize fully with the sorrowing till our own hearts have been wrung with sorrow—nor with poverty till we have tasted the cup that is drained by the poor. When we realize, however faintly, the evils and horrors of war let us think of the wretched Heathen whose normal condition is warfare, relentless exterminating warfare.

Hard times will never hurt us if we are true to God and the right. The storm and the floods may rise and beat against the house founded on a rock, but it cannot fall. The furnace may be heated seven times yet not a hair of the heads of the Children will be destroyed. The gold may be tried in the fire, but it comes out brighter, purer, more precious for the trial. Let us then walk bravely, manfully, Christlike, on our way, rejoicing in tribulation, learning the vanity of earthly wealth and seeking eagerly after the true, heavenly riches ; devoting ourselves and all we possess to our Saviour, and illustrating our faith when poverty and trouble are pressing upon us by deeds of love and holy self-denial. God has not promised us riches or honors in this world ; but he has promised us all our share of trouble, sorrow, conflict,—our share of hard times to try our faith, to purify and strengthen it. These are just the times when we should all rally round the standard of Jesus Christ as held aloft by the Church, and do what we can to plant and sustain that standard not merely within our own borders, but far away where it has never floated to the breeze.

C A T E C H I Z I N G .

We trust that the good old Scottish practice of catechizing will never be allowed to fall into disuse in this Church. Sabbath Schools, Bible Classes, Day Schools, however excellent and indispensable in their respective spheres, should never supersede family catechizing. Every parent is a priest in his own house, and ministers in spiritual things to his offspring. God has committed the souls and bodies of his children to his charge, and he is as solemnly bound to attend daily to the wants of the one as to those of the other. The seeds of sound doctrine should be sown in the youthful mind just as the light of reason begins to dawn. You cannot begin too early to bring the truth into contact with the soul—for if the soul is a *tabula rasa* be it yours to inscribe it all over with the precious words of God. It is also the part of ministers and elders to attend to this sadly neglected duty. The primitive Church, as well as all the Churches of the Reformation in their purest and best days, laid great stress upon the duty of catechizing. Luther composed a "rugged, plain, good Catechism." Calvin produced an incomparable one, which was the basis of our own Shorter Catechism as well as of the Heidelberg Catechism. It is