

the sound of music nor the mazy dance—has its wonted charm. The dejected mien and troubled countenance—the quivering lip and tearful eye—bespeak a heart ill at ease—tell of an "ail" within. Thou hast been awakened, oh sleeper, and thy dream is past. Through all thy worldliness and through all thy pleasures the voice of truth hath reached thy heart. Thou hast heard its fearful utterance, "The wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." The eye of thy spiritual vision has been opened. Thou seest the sword of divine justice suspended glittering and naked above thy head and ready to fall unto thy destruction. The terrors of the law have gathered around thee in one thick, black cloud of unmitigated darkness. "He hath hedged thee about that thou canst not get out, he hath made thy chain heavy. The arrow of conviction is rankling in thy soul and thy heart is turned within thee. The terrors of the Lord have made thee afraid. The sorrows of death have compassed thee—the pains of hell gat hold on thee." Awakened sinner flee to the Saviour.—There is hope in Israel concerning this thing. There is balm in Gilead for such "ails" as thine, and a Physician there. Betake thee to Christ. Rest in his love. Receive him by faith. Put thy case into his hand. He can save to the uttermost, and he will. He does. Yield thyself to him. Come at his invitation. "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Rely on his word, and in the peace and the joy which are in believing thou wilt forget forever, or remember only for praise and thanksgiving, that trouble of heart, that anguish of spirit, which evoke the inquiry, "What aileth thee now!"

III. What aileth thee now, Backsliding Professor! Thou wast numbered once among the people of God. Thou wast reckoned once among the followers of the Lamb. Thou wast counted once among the confessors of Christ. What aileth thee now? Art thou altogether gone away backward? Once, it may be years ago, thou wast welcomed to the Church of Jesus.—And for a time thou didst run well, who now hath hindered thee? This only would I learn of thee, having begun in the Spirit art thou now made perfect in the flesh? Oh who hath bewitched thee, thou foolish backslider, that thou shouldst not obey the truth? Wilt thou tread under foot the Son of God? Wilt thou count the blood of the covenant with which he was sanctified an unholy thing? Wilt thou do despite to the Spirit of grace?—Wilt thou crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame?—Wilt thou make shipwreck of faith? Wilt thou draw back unto perdition? Then, yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry, and thou wilt learn when it is all too late "what aileth thee now."

IV. What aileth thee now, Desponding Saint! In the day of thine espousals thou wast married unto Christ. Thy Maker became thy Husband, and thou didst rejoice in his love. His left hand was under thy head and his right hand did embrace. Then thou saidst, "My mountain stands strong and I shall never be moved. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord, the humble shall hear thereof and be glad." Then thou didst sing, "The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" What then aileth thee now that thou goest mourning all the day? Are the consolations of God small with thee? Is the light of his countenance hidden from thy view? Do thy sins alarm thee? Sayest thou with the Psalmist, "My iniquities are gone over my head as a heavy burden, they are too heavy for me?" Does duty appear very formidable—altogether beyond thy strength? Dost thou fear the power of thine enemies? Art thou brought into terrible temptations?—