

their puny and short-lived children, and that the posterity of the just inherit not only honor and a welcome in the world, 'an open door,' but also immunity from many a physical blemish and many a perilous craving? If the Hebrew race, after eighteen centuries of calamity, retains an unrivaled vigor and tenacity, be it remembered how its iron sinew has been twisted, from what a sire it sprang, through what ages of more than 'natural selection' the dross was thoroughly purged out, and . . . a chosen remnant left. Already in Egypt, in the vigorous multiplication of the race, was visible the germ of that amazing vitality which makes it, even in its overthrow, so powerful an element in the best modern thought and action." (Chadwick.)

*Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph*, v. 8. Long before this Joseph had hoped for deliverance through the good offices of Pharaoh's butler, whose dream he had interpreted in the prison (Gen. 40: 14). But this hope was disappointed and Joseph learned to depend on God and

not on powerful earthly friends. Now Israel was to be taught the same great lesson. It was not in the sunshine of Egyptian royalty that they were to find safety and peace, but in the light of the Divine countenance.

*All their service . . . was with rigour*, v. 14. In their prosperity they had forgotten God, and when men forget God, sooner or later they must suffer. This is an unfailing law, to which we do well to take heed. It may not be to-day or to-morrow, for God is never in a hurry, but it will be sometime, and common prudence says, beware! avoid entering on a road which in the end leads to disaster. This is the dark side of the woe that follows transgression, as one in the sunlight is followed by his shadow. But there is a bright side, too; for God is love as well as law. The punishment of sin may lead to its abandonment. So God means it to lead. And happy are those to whom suffering on account of their sins comes, as it came to Israel in Egypt, as the open door to the way that leads back to God—a rough pathway, but the way to joy and peace.

#### POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

Israel in Egypt represents the life of faith amid the temptations of the world. v. 1.

The Church of Christ traces its spiritual descent from another Seventy and another Twelve (Luke 6: 13-16: 10: 1, 2). vs. 2-5.

In the physical and spiritual world alike all mortal help must perish. v. 6.

God's promise survives the passing generations (Gen. 46: 3). v. 7.

"Put not your trust in princes" (Ps. 146: 3). v. 8.

Passion seeks to justify crime by exaggerating the evils to be met. vs. 9, 10.

If Israel had not forsaken God it would not have been enslaved by Pharaoh. v. 11.

Affliction is God's crucible for refining and purifying character. v. 12.

A Christian is in the wrong place when he is serving the world. v. 13.

Sin is a hard master. v. 14.

The preparation was through oppression.

But winter has in it a blessing for the autumn wheat; and Israel's winter of oppression was a sleeping summer. For this people had in it that seed which is "the word," "the word of God," "the word of the Kingdom."—MacGregor.

Many books of the Old Testament begin with the conjunction "And." This fact, it has often been pointed out, is a silent indication of the truth that each author was not recording isolated incidents, but parts of one great drama, events which joined hands with the past and future, looking before and after. Thus the Book of the Kings took up the tale from Samuel, Samuel from Judges and Judges from Joshua, and all carried the sacred movement forward towards a goal as yet un-reached. . . . The Books of the Pentateuch are held together in a yet stronger unity than the rest, being sections of one and the same narrative, and having been accredited with a common authorship from the earliest mention of them in ancient writings.