

hold fast with a tenacious grasp, and a perpetual watchfulness, to hold fast that which they have, for there are felons abroad intent upon the possession of their prey. And in drearier gloom, and for purposes of sudden warning, we get from him a troubled glimpse of some who were once enlightened, made partakers of the heavenly gift, tasted of the good Word of God, and felt the power of the world to come, but who have fallen away, crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. Now, if to be fore-warned is to be forearmed, if a circumstantial acquaintance with danger is necessary to guard effectually against its power, it will be well for us to look in the face the enemies who are marshalled to assail our peace.

Danger to our spiritual interest can arise to us from three sources, from the unfriendly interposition of evil spirits; from the treacherous suggestions of our own hearts, and from the allurements and intimidations of the world. That there are evil spirits, legions of them, combined in organization, and united under a crafty and sagacious head for purposes of temptation and mischief, is a truth which those will not deny who take the Scriptures for their guide. Their influence is boundless indeed, but they are mighty and they are numerous. They are spirits in chains, always in chains, but they already and effectually work in the hearts of those who deny their existence, and who are led captive at their tyrannous will. Masters of craft, inflamed with demon-hate against Jehovah and his servants, having long experience in their damning toil, consumed with the agonies of remorse, which endured through lapsing years, now takes no note of time; every sight of reclaimed prodigal, or of smiling Sabbath, or of prayerful household, only throws them into deeper restlessness, and in their rage for prey—

————— "They fan the air,
And mark heaven and earth, this lower world."

Akin to the temptations which come from direct supernatural agency, are those which assail a man when he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed. There are some hearts that need no tempter. They run greedily in the ways of iniquity; they banquet upon sin as upon a sweet morsel, and revel in the continual impurity in which

Satan holds his court within their souls. Nay, so contented are they under his power, that he can even leave them to themselves, complacent in the assurance that all his behests will be fulfilled in his absence, that his house will be swept and garnished, and that seven other more wicked spirits will be right royally welcomed to his home.

Then, when grace has changed the nature, and has imparted the principle of a nobler life, there are influences at work to enfeeble its development and to dwarf its growth. Affections fastening themselves on this present world, propensities to evil not yet extinguished, passions subdued and mastered but not dead, are only waiting for the well-circumstanced opportunity to grasp the man in the grip of their deadly power. The town of Mansoul has indeed surrendered to Emmanuel, but there are Diabolians yet lurking in its secret places, and in moments of depression, or in moments of unguardedness, they steal forth to entangle and betray. These are sources of danger. And as traitors in the camp are always more to be dreaded than the army outside—

"Worse than all our foes we find,
The enemy within;
The evil heart, the carnal mind,
Our own insidious sin."

And when to this you add the allurements of the world, the present time and appealing directly to the senses, while the spirit-world is invisible and afar, and the intimidations of the world, the tricks of withheld patronage, or of unheeded struggle, or of renewed embarrassment—all those tangleless but formidable excommunications which the world knows have a hold upon the soul,—there is a combined opposition that may well appal the bravest spirit, and bring a tremor into the stoutest heart of man. To whom then, in this time of our peril, shall we look for help? Where dwells the might that shall succour, or the generosity that shall wield the weapons of our defence? Shall we ask among the ministering hosts who bow before the throne, if he ply some bright angel in his heavenly strength, will undertake our cause? No, for he never felt, he knew not ever the gloom of a nature thoroughly drunken from its original. He cannot understand the spirit's bitterness, and the spirit's struggle. Our deliverer must have sympathy with ourselves, sympathy of condition, and in some sort, sympathy of ex-