

mountains, for the Lord hath comforted His people, and will have mercy upon His afflicted."

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who hath comforted us in all our tribulations."

"I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you," says Christ to His weeping disciples. The third person of the Godhead is specially designated the Comforter. Thus we have God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit united in a trinity of comforting.

The little word "as" is the key to the text, and the thought must therefore be followed out along this line. A mother comforts her child by providing for its needs. Long before the little child is able to frame its wants in words, the mother knows them and provides for them. What it shall eat, and what it shall drink, what it shall wear, and where it shall go, its hours of sleeping, and its hours of waking are all ordered by the thoughtful care of the mother.

So God cares for us. Everything that we need—our food and raiment, everything that we have or are—our health and comfort, everything that we hold sacred in life—our homes, friends and loved ones—all are from the hand of God, showered down upon us before we ask Him, or even know what we most need. "Surely God is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works."

Not only is a mother's comfort manifested in supplying the needs of her child, but also in denying her child many things for which it craves. If the child in your home could have everything it wanted, it would soon destroy itself. It would have the razor to flourish, the carving knife to fondle, the lamp to play with, and the bottle labelled poison to drink from. It often longs to have these things, and petulantly stretches its tender hands to

clutch them, but the wiser mother, in spite of childish protests and bitter grief, puts them away beyond reach, saying softly but firmly "Baby cannot have these things."

Even so are we short-sighted children of our Heavenly Father. We want so much to have things that He will not let us have. We eagerly clutch for them, and struggle and protest against Him when He will not let us have them. Often smarting under some great disappointment, we say out of a broken but rebellious heart, and through blinding tears, that God's hand is heavy upon us. His ways past finding out. We are so slow in learning that He knows us better than we know ourselves, and that He is far wiser than we can possibly be. Who cannot look back to the days of thoughtless, restless childhood, and see from the perspective of years, nothing but love in what was once thought to be parental harshness? So from the perspective of eternity we shall be able to look back upon the way along which God has led us, and to see that a loving Father wisely ordered all things for our good.

All this time, too, the child is quite unconscious of its mother's care. Indeed, no one ever knows the sum of a mother's thoughts for her child. All through the helpless years of infancy she broods over it. By night she keeps many a vigil, and by day her eye is ever upon it. Though she seems to be busy with other work, out of the corner of her eye she is constantly watching the tottering steps of her child as it plays about her, and ever and anon she quietly pushes some obstacle out of its path. So there is an unconscious guidance of providence in the life of every one of us. God sees us past many a danger that we do not see ourselves. He takes many an obstacle out of our path, and shuts up many a dangerous by-way in our face—watching with unslumbering eye that we are guided aright. As Jean Ingelow says in one