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"IF I FORGET THEE, O JERUSALEM! LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET ITS CUNNING."—Ps 137, a.5.

SERMON,

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Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.—Matthew xvi. 24.

In entering on any line of life, it is of very great importance to know, what is to be the general character: what of good it promises, and what price of labor and sacrifice you must pay. For the records of failure and disappointment tell us, how often these result from men yielding to a first impulse of feeling, without having taken a calm view of the amount of difficulty or perseverance implied in carrying it out. A choice is made, a decision is come to with an imperfect knowledge of facts. The young man perhaps in choosing his profession, does so because of some trivial thing that pleases his young fancy, but when he has entered the portal, and learns the continuance of study, of self-denial, of hard work it implies, he is disappointed, and falls back, to select and resolve on some other course on grounds perhaps as insufficient as before.

The man dissatisfied at home, resolves to leave his country for another, where he may live under less stringent laws, where labour shall bring richer return, where he shall forget he was once a struggling, poor man. But when he has crossed the main, when the enchantment of distance has been dispelled, when he finds himself confronting a life of hardship, of few comforts, of few friends, when his luxurious golden dream has left him, and the hard realities of a world in which the will is, that

he who would live must work, his heart faints within him, and he sits down to sigh after the land and luxuries he has left.

Such cases tell us how important it is in things temporal that wherever we go, or whatever we propose to do, we should enter on it with a clear understanding of what it is to be. We are then prepared to meet success calmly and to grapple with difficulties for which anticipation has braced us.

And this which is true of our common undertakings in life, is equally true of our religious profession. While first love may prompt us to enter on the Christian life, we should endeavor to prepare for the time when the impulse of feeling shall have passed, so that the change may be to the calmness of matured purpose; that when we are finding ourselves among the sober realities of Christian work, we may not "become weary in well-doing, but hold on, believing in the greatness of our cause, and that in due season, we shall reap, if we faint not.

Nothing can be further removed from that fanaticism and enthusiasm that resolves and acts without consideration, than the mind our Lord evidently deemed should be in his disciples. He does not lure them from their homes, from their crafts, from their nets, by any vague picturing of a life of ease and honor. He sets before them the plain facts, and from these bids them resolve. He does tell them of thrones awaiting them, of rewards in store for all who have followed him, but he as plainly forewarns them of the conditions. And better he says, not to commence to build a tower, than not having counted the cost, to leave it unfinished. Better not to enter on