

means to sustain them on the field of battle till victory crowns the fight ?

FOUR PLANKS.

There were four planks in the platform on which stood the saints of old in their witnessings and contendings for God, from Abel to Abraham, from Abraham to Moses, from Moses to Christ, and from Christ till the dark ages of the Church, when the good old platform of four planks was cast aside, for a platform of one plank—the Church, when Luther and his co-adjutors made a brave effort not yet finished, however, to set the feet of Christ's Church once more on its old vantage-ground. From the very beginning, Christ as King and Head of His Church, demanded of his people four great things, a share of their hearts, a share of their time, a share of their substance, and a share of their sons. To give Christ his own share of each of these things is to stand on a platform old as Abel, strong as the rock, wide as the world, and enduring as the everlasting hills.

OUR HEARTS.

1. The first thing God demands of his people is THE WHOLE OF THE HEART. This duty is implied in the character of God, the source of all truth, and goodness, and beauty. To know him is to love him, to love him, is to love him fully, and to love him fully is to love him eternally. This duty is also implied in the constitution of man, which, being in the image of God, finds its "other self" in God the sun and centre of his soul. This duty is, therefore, taught loudly and emphatically in the Bible, "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, with all thy strength.*" In theory, every Christian admits this; but how difficult is it to practice the theory! To translate this theory into reality

would be to live consecrated and charmed lives: it would be to walk with God: it would be to have our affections set on things above, not on things of this earth. The very first step, therefore, on the part of the Christian towards a life of holiness, happiness, usefulness, is to give the whole heart to God, to be done with half-way measures in religion, and half-measure ways, and to surrender the citadel of his being to the great Creator. "You cannot," said an old Welsh divine, "fill up a triangle with a circle. Now the world is a circle and the heart is triangular; the world will therefore never fill to satisfaction the heart of man. But in one corner of the heart set the Father, in another corner the Son, and in the third corner the Spirit, and the heart is then filled with a fullness that knows no lack, and that encloses to eternity." In that quaint parable there lies a deep and a sweet mystery which makes all the following sacrifices for God easy to the loving heart.

OUR TIME.

2. The second thing demanded by God is that his people should give him THE SEVENTH PART OF THEIR TIME. It was Adam's duty in Paradise to keep the garden and dress it; but on the seventh day he was to rest as God rested from his six day's work. Entire rest from labour meant, in a state of innocence, *uninterrupted communion with God*. This is the true idea of the Sabbath. It is not simply cessation from work; but cessation from work that the day may be spent with God and in his worship. That was the Sabbath of Eden, and the nearer the Sabbath comes to this model the nearer it is to what God intended it to be, a type, viz. and foretaste of "the Sabbath (heaven) that remaineth to the people of God" (Heb. iv. 9). To raise therefore, the Sabbath from being simply a day of rest to be a day