

of his darkened state by such helps as the blind man's dog of natural reason, or the blind man's staff of worldly prudence. But it is observed that there is one thing and perhaps only one thing that will break up the apathy of the blind and substitute for their passive and inert contentment, the anguish of a keen and torturing anxiety. And that one thing is the prospect, above all the near prospect of the restoration of their sight. It is thus with Bartimeus, when he understands that Jesus of Nazareth is passing by, and it is thus also with the sinner when he is made to understand the truth and meaning of that statement with which our Saviour was wont to close his addresses, and which, with admirable wisdom He put into the mouth of his Evangelist, "Notwithstanding be ye assured of this, that the kingdom of heaven is come nigh unto you." Bartimeus sitting by the wayside, and begging for charity in the drawing monotony of an ever repeated whine, is not more different from Bartimeus roused and animated and struggling with all the impetuosity of a heartfelt earnestness to gain the attention of the Saviour, than the sinner sitting under that proclamation of the gospel which conveys to him the notion of a dim distant and barely possible salvation from the misery of a present deliverance from the misery and mischief of sin and restoration to the friendship and favour of God is made to dawn upon his mind. Hence it has always been found that that Gospel is most potent in rousing sinners which preaches most definitely a present salvation. And when, to such preaching, there is added the confirmatory evidence of living witnesses testifying by look and life that the Gospel believed, has carried them from death to life, from darkness into God's marvellous light, from the kingdom and power of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear son, then the apathy of which we complain in the

hearers of the Gospel, gives way in a general awakening; and listless indifference is replaced by deep convictions and earnest inquiry. And here a lesson, an important lesson comes home to both preachers and hearers, what the one ought specially to hold forth and the other to inquire after, is a present Saviour, a Saviour near and ready to help, and a present salvation, what Jesus is willing to do now for our deliverance, what he is presently and immediately able and willing to bestow out of the rich treasures of his fulness. The thought of this, the expectation of this will, if any thing will, quicken us from our apathy and stir us up to an energetic effort to lay hold of the great salvation.

In Bartimeus, aroused and pleading, we have a beautiful picture of earnestness, a quality which, consisting as it does of keen feeling and vigorous purpose, has ever, see it where we may, a strong hold on human sympathy—may we not say of divine sympathy also—seeing that to all appearance we are, in this respect, only made after the image of God. However that may be, we know that it had ever a strong hold on the sympathy of Jesus, who was man as well as God; and has still, for see we not that, seated on the throne of the universe and swaying all things by his sceptre, he ever gives most success to the men of earnest minds, to the men who feel keenly and act vigorously. Of them he still seems to say, as he said of one earnest minded servant of old, "Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubabel thou shalt become a plain." Who can doubt, as we see the man of strong and earnest purpose cleaving his way through obstacles, and dashing them aside like a strong swimmer battling with an opposing flood, until he has changed impossibilities into realities, and stamped what men called his fancies in endurable characters on the hard rock of material fact—who can doubt, who witnesses the all but omnipotence with which