

the joy and conscientious self-renunciation of the new convert are good ; but the perfected faith, made perfect by many real conflicts, through dark sorrows, sore tribulations, and actual confidence in christ, is incomparably better ; because in the first we have but the bud ; in the second we have the foliage and the ripe fruit among-it. The one is the beginning, the other is the end. In the one we commence the journey to our immortal home ; in the other we stand on the Delectable Mountains, and catch glimpses of the pearly gates and the lovely spirits of the city of God. The one state contains the young child of God ; the other the perfect man, whose glorious countenance reveals angelic affinities.

But, sooner or later, the initial state of the new life gives way to the sober silent tests which the round of events apply to faith in Christ. The mere poetry and song of religion disappear. The imagination cools and folds its wings. Everything is now seen in a very different form and dress. A sober spirit settles over earth and sky. Memories, somewhat more deeply tinged with sadness, float through the heart. A much loved friend has fallen ; childhood's happy home has been broken up, and passed into the hands of strangers ; wealth has taken to itself wings and has flown away ; friends have failed just in the very moment of greatest need ; cherished hopes have been scattered like winter clouds, and, in a world full of people, we feel, for the first time, that we are alone. Perhaps, too, all earthly interests begin to totter, and the world shows itself too frail a thing to lean upon. The storm rages—and the future is an impenetrable darkness. This is no mere fancy. To thousands these lines will fall far short of the reality.

To Christians in this stage of the journey there are many sore temptations. Poverty, wealth, the love of life, and ease, the hope of future good, or blank despair ; the inability of man to know the future, the power of imagination—all these will Satan employ to crush the heart's trust in God, and reduce the soul to hopeless bondage. Here the senses can do no good. The ordinary experience on which worldly wisdom builds its temples is unavailing. The maxims of philosophy, theories of governments, and the tact of business are of no worth. One thing must be done, or we perish ; and that is, our whole being must be surrendered to faith. The speculative reason and the imagination must be subordinated to the promises of God in the Gospel. Our own weak-