

THOU maintainest my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places ; yea, a goodly heritage is mine."

One is reminded of the saintly Riccaltoun taking his humble meal on a rough boulder at his cottage door ; "I am resting on the Rock ; feeding on the promises !"

It was only the Divine presence and favour that made David's places pleasant in the desert, and his cup to run over. But those who seek their inheritance in Jehovah will find all things theirs. "The wilderness and solitary place are made glad for them, and the desert rejoices and blossoms like the rose."

"I will bless Jehovah, who hath been my counsellor ; my reins likewise admonish me in the night seasons."

כִּי conveys the idea of "checking" rather than of "instructing." Like the *dæmon* of Plato, David's inward monitor "warned him rather of what he ought not, than what he ought to do." When, *e.g.*, he was restrained from killing Saul in the cave, he was wisely and divinely "admonished" ; "Jehovah shall smite him," he whispered to Abishai ; "either his day shall come to die, or he shall descend into the battle and perish" (1 Sam. xxvi. 10). In all this he kept to the terms of his vow, and obeyed the admonitions of his conscience.

"I have set Jehovah ever before me : because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved."

Perhaps David was never so near in heart and will to God, never so much the "man according to God's own heart," as at this season of trial and adversity. He was slowly rising to the full assurance of his faith, and to the "white heat" of holy enthusiasm, that drew from him the imperishable words that follow. In the calm depths of the ocean of peace in his soul, which the storms on the surface could not disturb, to change the metaphor, the Divine Spirit was putting the pearl into the oyster shell, "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever." Out of the fiery ordeal of David's desert life Jehovah brought this gem of the psalms, as He brings all jewels from the war-ringing elements of nature.

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will."