

every day, with GOD, bringing the greatness and blessedness of GOD into the smallest details of life.

Think then with joy this morning that you are come to take a step which is to be by the grace of GOD a real advance in the old way in which you entered at your Baptism. It is a consolation to realize that this way of the dedicated life is not a strange new way for you. There never has been but one way to GOD, that is Jesus Christ. Coming to the altar to make your vows to Him, going back after the service to your little community—Home—the way you find yourself in is the old way you entered by Holy Baptism, in which you were invigorated by Confirmation, and advanced by every Confession and Communion.

But here to-day is a joyful and firm step *forward*, a real *advance* in the old way of confidence in GOD through Christ. Now you come to confirm as solidly as you can all your old, most solemn and dear convictions, all past acts of faith and penitence, all your old desires and resolutions to serve GOD better.

You know now how years ago you meant to serve GOD, and yet there were times when you doubted your own sincerity. Do I really mean all that I say to GOD in my prayers, and teach the children?—this step to-day, these three vows which I come to GOD to offer, are the answer. I have often failed sadly, but Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee, by this act I renew my baptismal vows, and all past good desires, and put my whole liberty into Thy hands, keeping nothing back for myself.

Henceforth the Christian faith is to be to me a lovelier, a truer thing than ever, and the Christian life shall mean all that I can take in of it. Here I part with all my independence that I may prove to our Lord that I have really heard His call, and that the whole meaning and beauty of life shall be my response to Him, and that I have no longer any question as to *how far* I intend to trust Him, Who gave Himself for me, and calls me into His companionship in this Religious state.

Would I really lay down my life for Christ, as the martyrs did of old, and as they did lately in China? I hope so; and as a step to make it certain, I rise up to-day to leave all that I have in the world, to leave my little treasures, and, what is more to me, my personal independence, for Christ's sake, and that with nothing but gladness and thankfulness.

But even after that questions will rise still, as clouds do, and pass, "Is not this religious habit, these vows, something strained, a human device, a pretending to do by a natural self-willed