

throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

The believer, confident of being in friendship with God, justifies his own peace and security alike against timid friends and unbelieving scoffers, from the consideration of Jehovah's supremacy and universal government, and His perfect acquaintance with all the schemes and works of men.

5. The Lord trieth the righteous; but the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth.

The Lord manifests the character of His people through the providential trials to which He subjects them, and the duties to which His word calls them. But sinners of every class—whether their sins be immediately directed against Himself or their fellow-men—the profane or the malignant—are the objects of His unchangeable opposition.

NOTE.—Much may be said in favour of this rendering of the first clause, "The Lord proveth the righteous, and the wicked." So Martin's French version. How intense the expression, "His (Jehovah's) soul hunteth the wicked."

6. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.

Bitter indeed is the cup which the wicked shall be made to drink. The destruction of Sodom, and the other cities of the plain, by a storm of fire and brimstone from heaven, foreshadows their more awful doom.

NOTE.—Gesenius would render the word for "snares" "lightning" in this; he follows some ancient Jewish critics, and this rendering of the word is at least favoured by the context.

7. For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness: his countenance doth behold the upright.

Jehovah's righteousness is perfect; yea, and like all His other attributes, infinite: and such also is His love of righteousness, and His complacency in all those who practise it.

NOTE.—It seems better to render the first clause "Jehovah is righteous." So the Syriac and several modern versions. Alexander renders the last clause "The upright (man) shall His (Jehovah's) face behold." But good reasons may be given for the common rendering, as may be seen in Hengstenberg.

PSALM XII. *To the Leader of the Music on the Octave. A Psalm of David.*

1. Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.

God's cause in this world may at times appear to be greatly dependent on particular individuals, so that their removal by death may seem to be very detrimental to it. And to whom in such circumstances can His people betake themselves but to Himself? Seeing that His faithfulness and all His other perfections are involved in the universal establishment of the reign of righteousness on the earth, and that he can make the removal of one of His faithful servants the occasion of raising up others, and these still better fitted for advancing His cause.

2. They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips, and with a double heart, do they speak.

Ungodly men, in so far as they justify their disregard of God, are gone up to believe a lie; and it is not be wondered that, in the indulgence

of the self-love affections, they should often practise dissimulation and falsehood in their intercourse with each other.

3. The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things.

Those who, regardless of truth, study to gratify the pride of others, and those who, on boastful speeches, give utterance to the pride of their own hearts, are alike hateful to God, who requires truth in the inward part and delights in the lowly. And, in the great day of retribution, they shall be made to experience His unmitigated wrath.

4. Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us?

The tongue is employed in its highest and noblest office, when it is celebrating the praise of God. How greatly is it debased and perverted when it is found claiming for its possessor an exemption from all authority, human and divine.

5. For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.

The sighs and groans of the oppressed and persecuted, as well as their prayers, "enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth." And He will not linger to appear in their behalf, and avenge them on their enemies.

NOTE.—The last clause is highly elliptical, and translators and critics vary in rendering it. We would give a preference to that of Gesenius, which is in substance this: "I will place in safety him whom they treat with contempt."

6. The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

The words of God are found in the Holy Scriptures; and these are truth, pure and un-mixed; and so, indestructible. They are in these respects unlike the best of human compositions—to which some defects always attach, from the limited views or the erring judgments of their authors. The truth contained in the Scriptures has an infinite excellency too, from its subject; it unfolds the character and government of God as a Saviour, and so invests with an everlasting salvation all those who receive and embrace it.

NOTE.—Some, and amongst these, Gesenius, renders the phrase, "tried in a furnace of earth," "purified from earth in a furnace." Alexander, who remarks that "the phrase is among the most doubtful and disputed in the whole book," for other renderings are given of it—concludes, and perhaps justly, in favour of the rendering as in our version.

7. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.

The world, so long as it is ruled over by Satan, must prove the enemy of the people of God. And God magnifies His grace and power in them, in making them victorious over it, and in conducting them safely through it, into His everlasting kingdom.

NOTE.—From this generation, is not from this age or time, but from this class of men.

8. The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted.

If it be ill with a land "when folly is set in great dignity," or when "its king is a child," (Ecc. x., 6, 16,) it is still worse with it when its rulers are infamous for their profligacy, for then,

wickedness is patronised, and so multiplied and rendered more daring and powerful.

NOTE.—The last clause is truly difficult, even in rendering it "like the risings of a tempest upon the sons of men." This is perhaps fanciful; and though difficulties attach to the rendering of our version, no one of the others proposed in its stead is free from equal difficulties.

XIII. *To the Leader of the Music. A Psalm of David.*

1. How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?

Nature would interpret the afflictions which God sometimes sends on His people, as tokens of His having forgotten them, or withdrawn from them; and it prompts in them complaints and expostulations accordingly.

2. How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?

The distraction of worldly cares, inward griefs of various kinds, and the prevalence of enemies, prompt the cry—especially when faith is weak—"Lord, how long shall it thus be?"

3. Consider and hear me, O Lord my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death;

God's people are prone to give way to security when no danger is apprehended; and so, when danger is imminent and great, they are equally prone to despondency. And when in such a state of mind, they betake themselves to God, their very prayers indicate distrust and impatience. They seem to think that God requires His attention to be specially called to them, as though He were not heeding them; they feel as though all were over with them.

4. Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; and those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.

The prevalence of the enemies of the people of God over them, would involve the dishonour of God himself, as well as their own shame and ruin; and so they may well plead earnestly, and withal confidently, with Him, for the overthrow of their enemies.

5. But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.

The mercy and salvation of God find their true correlates in the trust and joy of the believer.

6. I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.

Praise is the utterance of gratitude to God, and of joy and delight in Him; and all His people, however at times tempted to indulge in the querulous strain of the Psalmist, at the beginning of this Psalm, will sooner or later, in the conscious enjoyment of Jehovah's loving-kindness, find abundant reasons for praise.

R.

MONTREAL, March 14th, 1851.

THE SIX OF COVETOUSNESS.—We read in the Bible of persons falling into gross sins, and yet being restored and saved; but not of the recovery of one who was guilty of the sin of covetousness, Balaam, Gehazi, Judas, Annanias and Sapphira, are awful examples.

A NOBLE PURPOSE.—The British and Foreign Bible Society intend to present a complete set of their translation of the Bible in no less than one hundred and fifty languages at the World's Fair in London. It has also been suggested that a copy be presented to every foreigner in attendance in his own language.