

Unto Thee will I cry, O Lord, my Rock,—Psalm xxviii. 1.

ungodly. Oh, despise not the riches of His goodness. Turn and live, why *will* ye die? How *can* you reject the pleading of such unfathomable love?

[FOR OUR MISSION UNION.]

A House of Defence.—Psalm xxxi. 2.

By MRS. J. C. YULE.



KING David realized his own weakness, the strength of his foes, and his need of a safe refuge. Looking around, he saw enemies on every side, eager to swallow him up; within, a heart deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; backward, unnumbered failures and countless hairbreadth escapes; forward, gins and traps, pitfalls and lurking foes waiting for an unwary step, that they might cast him down. He had already slipped and faltered many times; his footing

was insecure, he was weak, weary, disheartened, and longed for some sure standing place—a rock on which to plant his feet—a cleft in the rock into which he might enter and be safe.

And, so looking up to God, he cried “Be THOU my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me.”

Is it not thus with thee, very often, oh, child of God? Looking to thyself, thou seest only thy deceitful heart, thy unruly passions, thy inconstant will. Without, are the insidious tempter, and the alluring world: within is weakness and indecision—behind, a pathway strewn with the wreck of unkept resolves and broken vows—before, an untried path, where unbelief suggests a thousand terrors. Weak, weary, disheartened, you have longed for the strong rock, where you might plant your feet securely, for the rock-hewn fortress, into which you might enter, shut the doors about you and rest, for a house of defence, against which the storm might beat and the foemen rage in vain. The King of Israel found such a resting place. Do you not hear him sing—“The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?—the Lord is the strength of my life of whom shall I be afraid.” “I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me and heard my cry, He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, and of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.” “The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.” Why, then, are you now cast down as though there was no more help in Him? Has He not said “I am the Lord, I change not?” Is not your Saviour declared to be “the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever?”

Are you hedged in by difficulties on the right hand and on the left? Listen, “Is any thing too hard for the Lord?” Is He who created the heavens and all the host of them, who poured out the seas, and set bounds to them that they should not pass, who piled

up the everlasting hills height above height, to be baffled by your petty difficulties? Did He not bring Israel through the Red Sea upon dry land?—did he not cause His people to drink water from the flinty rock?—did He not send them bread from heaven, and make the skies dark with feathered fowl, that they might have meat?—did He not open a path for them through the Jordan, that so they might enter the goodly land that He had promised their fathers? And has He changed since those old days, that your difficulties should appal you?—Has His ear grown dull of hearing that He should not hear your cry? Is His arm shortened that He cannot reach you, and save you out of all your troubles? Nay, nay:—He that keepeth you does not slumber! He that heareth the raven’s cry, and feedeth the hungry sparrow, cares much—very much more for you! Cast your care upon Him, for *He does care for you!*

Are you poor? hear Him say “I will feed even you, O poor of the flock!” Though the Lord of glory was rich with all the riches of Heaven, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich. Can you not trust such a Helper? Are you sick? Is it not said of your Lord, “Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses?”—and shall he not aid you even in this extremity, if you look to Him in faith? Are you friendless, an orphan, a widow? Is he not the friend that sticketh closer than a brother?” Is it not God that doth execute judgment for the fatherless and the widow? Listen. “A father of the fatherless, and a Judge of the widows, is God in His holy habitation!” Can you not trust Him? Enter into the Rock, and hide thee, until your calamities be over past! “Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed!”

Thus, oh weary desponding soul, whatever be the nature of the case, thou shalt find thy God to be a Strong Rock, if thou wilt only by faith plant thy feet upon His immutable promises, and rest there in child-like confidence and trust. Thus shalt thou find Him an impregnable fortress, a house of defence, against which the hosts of hell, and all the tempests of earth shall be powerless for harm; a safe hiding place where thou mayest sit unmoved, and sing the songs of deliverance and praise. Trusting Him, resting upon His promise, and abiding in His love, thou shalt find thyself secure; “for He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust:—His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.” “Though thy sins have been as scarlet they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” “Though you have lien among the pots, yet you shall be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers as yellow gold.” “Behold, they that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion that cannot be removed, but abideth forever.” For, “As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even forever.”—“Wait, I say, on the Lord!”