

der;" and he found "that he could speak better and more pleasantly than he did before."

It lies in the nature of human advance on the road of improvement, that, whatever be a man's occupation, be it handicraft, or art, or knowledge, or moral conquest of self, at each forward step which he takes he grows more conscious of his shortcomings. It is thus with his whole career, and those who rise highest are least satisfied with themselves. Very simply Bunyan tells the story of his progress. On his outward history, on his business and his fortunes with it, he is totally silent. Worldly interests were not worth mentioning. He is solely occupied with his rescue from spiritual perdition. Soon after he had profited by the woman's rebuke, he fell in "with a poor man that made profession of religion and talked pleasantly of the Scriptures." Earnestness in such matters was growing common among English labourers. Under his new friend's example, Bunyan "betook him to the Bible, and began to take great pleasure in reading it," but especially, as he admits frankly (and most people's experience will have been the same), "the historical part; for as for St. Paul's Epistles and Scriptures of that nature, he could not away with them, being as yet ignorant of the corruption of his nature, or of the want and worth of Jesus Christ to save him."

Not as yet understanding these mysteries, he set himself to reform his life. He became strict with himself in word and deed. "He set the Commandments before him for his way to heaven." "He thought if he could but keep them pretty well he should have comfort." If now and then he broke one of them, he suffered in conscience; he repented of his fault; he made good resolutions for the future, and struggled to carry them out. "His neighbours