

bodily suffering, as has been said, only hastened him to paradise ; so that while it was a suffering to him bodily, it was a great gain spiritually. Thus, I judge, it will ever be found by those under this class of suffering. The suffering directly promotes spiritual gain ; as in old age, the old man perishes, the inner is renewed day by day. There is no sense of reserve with the Lord in this suffering and no break in the communion. It is something like the remnant who suffer for the sins of their ancestors, but the Lord sympathizes with them and "makes all their bed in their sickness." I could not, as a rule, tell when a person is suffering governmentally, but, I am sure, each one who is suffering ought to ascertain from the Lord the meaning of it.

2. SUFFERING IN AND FOR SERVICE.

—In every service or act of faith there is a measure of bodily suffering, but this is only to purge or make one the more partaker of His holiness.—This is properly the discipline spoken of in Hebrews xii. The cloud of witnesses suffered often much, but this suffering contributed to their gain. They were more detached from the power and weight of the flesh.—Like Stephen, every stone, as far as he was concerned, only detached him the more from the man in the flesh, and separated him from everything unto God. This was Paul's thorn in the flesh ; and hence it is said, "we who live are always delivered unto death." *As there is so little persecution now, the suffering is more occasional attacks than by a general debility. Thus Epaphroditus suffered. "For the work of Christ he was

nigh unto death : but God had mercy on him ; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow." A sorrow indeed it is, to lose any true servant. In suffering of this order, there is a fresh sense of favour. The discipline is really corresponding with the true desires of the heart ; it is freeing one of the obstacles in the way to a more perfect service ; and there is an assurance that in some special way the sufferer shall receive a mark of God's favour. "Thou preparest a table for me in the presence of mine enemies." Thus was it with Abraham when he returned from the slaughter of the kings, and with Paul in the prison at Philippi. Often the very spot of the suffering is the scene of the recompense.

3. SUFFERING IN CONNECTION WITH THE LORD'S TABLE.—

This suffering is because of eating and drinking unworthily. As it is written, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." This is peculiarly the Lord's discipline.—The body is His ; but when one eats and drinks unworthily, he "shall be guilty in respect of the body and of the blood of the Lord." He eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. The Lord as in the spirit of jealousy, causes that as you do not enter into what He suffered on your account, you should suffer in your own body. It is not for any one to assume that he can distinguish this suffering from any other bodily suffering in another, but surely he would be able to distinguish it for himself. I feel assured, that there is always a sense of reserve with the Lord connected with