

was uniformly solemn, appeared to me to be frank and candid, was an intelligent woman, had become prayerful, and at times deeply anxious about her future welfare. And yet, as weeks passed on, she appeared to make no progress, but remained in much the same state of mind, unsettled and without peace.

She had no resting-spot. Whenever her thoughts were directed to the subject of religion, a pensiveness would spread over her soul, like the shadow of a cloud over the summer landscape. I pitied her. She was an interesting woman. Her naturally fine mind had not been neglected. She had received the accomplishments of a careful education. She was young, she was beautiful, she was tasteful; and the ease of her manners threw an additional gracefulness over her tall and graceful person. But a cloud was on her brow. It was out of its place—it had no right there. Such a brow ought to be bathed in the sun-light. A heart like hers ought not to be the victim of some secret and mysterious sorrow, and such a soul as hers ought to find in the kindness of Christ the balm for its sorrows.

She had been married about a year, and her husband, like herself, had become interested in the subject of religion. But they were very unlike in their religious successes. He seemed to get onwards; she remained stationary and sad. They were about the same age (twenty seven, perhaps), and in other respects much resembled each other; but they were unlike in religion.

She was born and had been educated in a distant part of the country, and among people of somewhat different manners; and I thought that she might perhaps have some feelings of melancholy and loneliness, as she had come to reside among strangers. But I found she had no feelings of that kind. On the contrary, she was delighted with her new home; was easy and familiar, and friendly in her social intercourse with her new acquaintances. Several times I called upon her, and aimed to discover what made her so downcast in mind, and especially what hindered her from attaining peace with God, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. But I could gain no light on the subject. After all my conversation with her, the peculiarity which hung around her was as mysterious to me as ever.

At one time I suspected that her seriousness might arise more from mere fear than from any just sense of her sin; and therefore I aimed, by explanation of the law of God, and by application of it to her own heart, to render her conviction more deep and clear. But, to my surprise, I found that her sense of sin and unworthiness, and of the wickedness of her heart, appeared to be more than usually deep and solemn.

At another time I feared that she might have a very imperfect idea of the freeness of divine grace; and therefore I aimed to show her how 'the kindness and love of God our Saviour' offers to every sinner pardon and eternal life as a free gift, by us unmerited and unbought. And again to my surprise, I found that her ideas on this point also appeared as clear and as strong as any that I could express.

So it was with her, as it seemed to me, on every part of evangelical truth. I could discover in her mind no error or deficiency: and could not even conjecture what kept her from flying to Christ in faith. Evidently the Holy Spirit was with her, but she yet lingered; and her state appeared to me the more wonderful, because her husband had become, as we believed, a follower of Christ, and was cheerful and happy in hope.

As I was conversing with her one day about her state of mind, she somewhat surprised me by suddenly asking,—

"Will you lend me the Presbyterian Confession of Faith?"

"Certainly, Madam," said I, "if you want it; but I advise you to let it alone."

"I want to know," said she, "what the Presbyterians believe."

"They believe just what you do, I suppose," said I; "they believe the Bible,—they believe just what you hear me preach every Sabbath."

"Other denominations," said she, "who disagree with you, profess to believe the Bible too."

"Yes, that is all true; but I do not wish you to agree with either; but to agree with the Bible. I have no desire to make a Presbyterian of you. I only wish you to be a Christian, and I am fully content to have you judge for yourself what the gospel teaches, without being influenced by the Presbyterian Confession of Faith or any other human composition. The Bible is the rule. If we agree with it, we are right; if not, we are wrong. You will understand it well enough to be saved