

We may observe again how little disposed we are to measure or number our future days by the past, how we will persist in regarding as indefinitely prolonged a period which we know by past experience to be brief indeed. A man may not expect to live more than ten or twenty years, yet he allows himself to regard those ten or twenty years as a far longer—ampler—space than ten or twenty years appear to him as he measures them back upon the path which he has already trodden.

And if men thus fail to number their days in respect of the general limit imposed on the duration of human life, still more do they fail to number them in respect of their extreme uncertainty. This is the hardest, the most humiliating and painful lesson; and we are very slow to learn it. We feel how very far we are from having learned it, when the life of another is suddenly cut short, and when we are thus compelled, for the moment at least, to account of our life as something far less stable—far less secure—than we are prone to think it.

Nor is it to be wondered at that men should be slow to learn this lesson, so long as they consent not to appropriate *all* that divine instruction to which the text refers. It is a thankless, profitless task to number our days, except it be to apply our hearts unto wisdom; unto the soothing—cheering—strengthening wisdom of the gospel of Christ, which assures us that our brief uncertain life is not a thing despised by Him who gave it; that our frail humanity is pitied and cherished by Him—that His wisdom and His love have circumscribed our narrow span—that His wisdom and His love have appointed that we should not know what a day may bring forth.

We must be careful to accept God's truth as a whole, and we must remember that that truth is taught both by nature and by Revelation; in the laws of the kingdom of Providence, and in the doctrines and precepts of the kingdom of grace. It is most unwise and ungrateful to neglect any part of this teaching, and the unhappy result of such neglect is that we too surely misinterpret that part of it which forces itself upon