

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE FULNESS OF TIMES.

EPHES. I. 10.

The good pleasure of God is to unite all that is created under Christ's hand. This is His purpose for the administration of the times in which the result of all His ways shall be manifested. It will be a grand spectacle, as the result of God's ways, to see all things united in perfect peace and union, under the authority of man, the Second Man and Son of God; we, as being redeemed, associated with Him in the same glory as Himself, His companions in heavenly glory, as the objects of God's eternal counsels. Ephes. i. directs our attention to the communication of God's counsels respecting it, and not to the scene itself. The eternal state, in which God is all in all, is quite another thing. The administration of the fulness of times is the result of God's ways in government; the eternal state is the result of the perfection of His nature. In Christ we inherit our part, heirs of God, as it is said in Rom. viii., and joint-heirs with Christ. Here, however, the Spirit sets before us the position, in virtue of which the inheritance has fallen to us, rather than the inheritance itself. He ascribes it also to the sovereign will of God, as He did before with regard to the special relationship of sons unto God. In the inheritance we shall be to the praise of His glory; as in our relationship to Him we are to the praise of the glory of His grace.

DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH.

In the course of God's dealing with men, we may observe that He is again and again *testing* them ; and yet always providing for the failure in which He knew this testing would end.

He began thus with Adam in the Garden. He put him to proof, setting him as under law. But in the mystery of the sleeping man, and the woman taken out of him, He would have us learn, that from the very beginning He knew where this would end, and provided another and a better thing.

So with Israel afterwards. He tested them by the law ; but He revealed to them " the shadows of good things to come " (Heb. x. 1), the pledges of grace and salvation ; knowing that man would again destroy himself, and be ruined under the law of Mount Sinai, as he had already been under the law or command delivered to him in the Garden of Eden.

Then, by the ministry of the prophets, the Lord was leading the people back to obedience, if so be they would be led that way. But by the same prophets, He was anticipating the grace in which a self-ruined, helpless and incorrigible people must finally stand, if blest at all.

John the Baptist then came, according to the prophecies which went before upon him, as the Voice, the Messenger, the Elijah, of Messiah. But he was also, in another aspect of his ministry, the *Witness of the Lamb of God*, and the *Harbinger of the Light of the world* ; characters in which the prophecies had not foreshewn him, but which put him in company with the Messiah, or the Christ, as dispensing grace and salvation to Israel and to man, on the clear assumption that all would fail under the ministry that was then about to test them.

By the Lord's own personal ministry in the cities and villages of Israel, the same process is conducted. He is testing His people by a proposal of Himself to them again and again ; but He is likewise witnessing sovereign grace and redemption, knowing, as He did, that they would but again destroy themselves under the trial that was then being made of them. By His commission to the twelve and to the seventy, He was doing the same—for such ministries were but a reflection of His.

And it is thus to the end. The apostleship at Jerusalem under the Holy Ghost upon the ascension of Christ was still testing the Jew ; and the Jew failed under it again. But "times of restitution" and of "refreshing" (Acts iii.) were looked at in the distance. And then in the last commission instituted by Him, that is, in the apostleship of Paul, the good news of God's salvation was sent to the ends of the earth, to gather the elect that they might act and shine as the Body of Christ ; but in that same apostleship He anticipates what the end of that ministry would be, and makes provision accordingly. This is seen in the second epistle to Timothy ; confirmed as that is by the challenge of the candlesticks in Rev. i.-iii. ; and further, by the judgment of Christendom in Rev. iv.-xix. These thoughts may naturally introduce me to my subject—"Dispensational Truth."

It has been said, "that the study of it has a withering effect upon the soul." Let us try this by the light of the wisdom of God, as we get that light (where alone we can get it) in the word of God.

In the epistle to the Romans, the saints of God are largely instructed in this character of truth. Chapters ix.-xi. are a very full writing on divine dispensations. But I grant this is *after* they have

been settled and established in *personal* truth—truth, I mean, that concerns themselves in their relation to God, as chapters i.-viii. shew us.

Now this would let us know, that there is a condition of soul, in which it would be unhealthy or unseasonable for it to make the ways or dispensations of God its study. And, therefore, if the person who has thus spoken be intellectually inquiring into such matters, divine and precious as they are, before the question of his own relation to God is settled, I can suppose that he has found this study to be a withering of the soul.

And again, in the first epistle to the Corinthians, I see an apostle refusing to feed those saints of God with such knowledge as we are now speaking of. In the stores given him of the Spirit, he had "hidden wisdom," or "the wisdom of God in a mystery," and he would bring it out to the "perfect." But the Corinthians were in a bad condition; and he would, therefore, attend to them personally, rather than feed or entertain them with knowledge of God and His ways. And very much in this same way, I may say, the Lord Himself had already dealt with Nicodemus, the Rabbi, as we see in John iii.

So that again, I grant, there is a condition of soul, in which it would be unhealthy for it, nay, unwarranted of the Spirit of God, to make dispensational truth its study. And, therefore, if the person who has thus spoken be walking carelessly, I do not wonder at the soul withering if it be thus occupied.

But further, not only is the condition of the soul to be thus considered, as we make these things our study, there is also a *mode* of studying them which the word of God suggests, and which is to be considered also. I would instance what I mean. The

apostle, in tracing the dispensations of God, as I have already observed he does in Rom. ix.-xi., interrupts his progress through that great subject, and takes up for a time something that is strongly *personal* in its character, or in its bearing upon us individually. I mean in chapter x. of that wonderful Scripture. For there we listen, each one for himself, sinners as we are, to the voice of law and to the voice of faith, with suited admonitions, and encouragements, and teachings.

Just, I may say, as in 1 Cor. xii.-xiv., where the same apostle is unfolding *ecclesiastical* truth, as he is here unfolding *dispensational* truth; for there in like manner he interrupts himself by something deeply and solemnly personal and practical, as we see in chap. xiii. of that Scripture.

So that I fully grant that the condition of the soul, and the mode of pursuing this study, have to be considered, while we are engaged in it. But, with these and kindred admonitions and jealousies, I find the wisdom of God does set us down carefully and continually to the meditations of His counsels and ways in His different dispensations; and that He has been doing so from the beginning.

Have we not proof of this? Surely the very earliest divine records, the patriarchal stories of the book of Genesis, teem with notices of God's counselled ways. In them He is issuing and telling out the end at the beginning. They are all of them true narrations—surely they are—and we are to acquaint ourselves with them as such. But is that all? Is it merely to tell me what happened so many thousand years ago, that they are written for me? Or, do I expect to find in them, disclosures of divine secrets, good for the use of edifying one in the knowledge of God and His ways? I have no doubt how I am to answer this. Sarah and

Hagar are not merely a domestic tale, but "an allegory." And I am full sure, the same book of Genesis, where I read that allegory, teems with kindred ones—some more, some less, rich and profound in communications of the Divine Mind in eternal counsels.

And then, Mosaic ordinances take up the same wondrous tale. The Jewish year, as Leviticus xxiii. would tell us, measures, as in a miniature and in a mystery, the way of God from the day of the Exodus out of Egypt, to the day of entering and dwelling in the kingdom, the millennial glory of Christ and the creation.

Afterwards, the Prophets were instructed in those ways of God, and ordained to be the witnesses of them to all generations. I admit, there was another purpose of God in calling them out; and that was, to bring back Israel to their allegiance to Jehovah, if so be they would turn and repent. But the grander, and still more characteristic purpose of their ministry was this—to declare the ways of God, according to His counselled wisdom in dealing with this world of ours.

And when we come to the New Testament writings, we find the same. Not only do certain parts of those writings make such truth their subject (such as Rom. ix.-xi., as we have already said), but such truth will be seen through parts and passages, which are more immediately dealing with other things. Dispensational truth is there called, by the high titles of "wisdom" and "mystery;" and well it surely may bear such dignities. And the apostle prays that we may have spiritual understandings, to entertain and reach such themes. He tells us, that he speaks of such among the "perfect;" and he intimates that it was the shame and loss of the Corinthians, that they were not

prepared for truth of that high quality. And in all this, great honour is surely put on such truth itself, and encouragement of a peculiar kind given to the study of it. And if we are in company with that Spirit, who wrote the whole volume, we cannot but be acquainting ourselves with it, as we go from Genesis to Revelation, throughout Scripture from first to last.

But further.

Godliness is connected with *the truth* (1 Tim. iii. 15, 16). Our character is to be formed by it, and our service defined and directed by it. The truth is the instrument and the standard. It is that by which the Spirit works in us and with us; and it is that by which we try everything. It is an *instrument* in the Spirit's hand, and a *standard* in ours—and the truth that is this, is connected with the dispensations of God.

This is seen at once. Morals and the duties which attach to human relationships get a peculiar character from their connection with such truth—as, among other scriptures, Eph. iv., v., vi., would, in many particulars, illustrate for us. We are now in this dispensation to learn “Christ,” and be taught “as the truth is in Jesus.” What was holiness and service under one dispensation, ceases to be so under another. Actions change their character with the changing time. In order to *do* right, or to *be* right, according to God, we must “know the time,” as the apostle speaks. The day was, when it was holy to call down fire from heaven to consume adversaries. But the day came, when the offer to do such a thing had to suffer rebuke—and that too, under the same supreme divine authority which had warranted, nay, inspired it, before. “Everything is beautiful in its season”—and dispensational truth is the great arbiter of

seasons, telling us the times and what the Israel of God and the church of God ought severally to do.

At one time, the Lord put the sword into the hand of His servant, at another, He took it out of such a hand. Joshua and Peter tell me this. "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's," was a divine decree in the day of the Evangelists—but, in earlier days, every trace of Gentile rule in the land of the fathers was required to be clean blotted out by the zeal and strength of the children. It was not to be "God" and "Cæsar" then, but Jehovah's name was to be written on the land of the Twelve Tribes, and every stick and stone on it be claimed in the name of Jehovah of Israel, without a rival.

Places and ordinances, in like manner, change their character with dispensations. But this is more easily admitted or apprehended than the other. Mount Sinai where God came down, and which awful, consecrated spot, none were to touch but Himself, is now simply "Sinai in Arabia"—and institutions, which were once divine, and the dishonouring of which was death, are now but "beggarly elements," "rudiments of the world." Nay, more—they are even put in company with idols (Gal. iv.). Thus, what was sacred at one time, becomes common at another; while, what was unclean once, is afterwards given for the communion of the saints. The serpent of brass becomes Nehustan—a company of those who had been repudiated as "uncircumcised," becomes "a habitation of God through the Spirit."

Thus it is indeed so, that the character, the value with God, of actions, places, ordinances and the like, will change with changing dispensations. We are to decide on their godliness, their sacred-

ness, their holiness, by "the truth." And not only is it thus with changing dispensations, but with the changing phases and conditions of the same dispensation.

The harps of Israel, for instance, were struck in the days of Solomon, and songs were sung when Heman, Asaph and Jeduthun were in the land. But in the days of Babylon, the harps were to be hung on the willows, and the songs of Zion to be silent.

So, David, according to the mind of God, when his hunger and wanderings bespoke a ruined condition of things among the people, would ask for the shew bread of the Sanctuary for himself and his followers, though in the day of the integrity of Israel and their dispensation, it was lawful only for the priests to eat of it.

So again, this same David could not go on with a purpose that was right in his heart, as the Lord Himself said of it, because it was not right, or in season, *dispensationally considered* (2 Chron. vi. 8, 9).

And thus we see, from a few samples out of many, that different stages or eras, or conditions of things, in one and the same dispensation, have their several and peculiar truth on which to ground their own peculiar claims, just as surely and simply as if they were different dispensations. The children of Israel under Joshua, and under the Judges, the Jews at home, the Jews in Babylon, the Jews returned, though all of them alike under the same covenant had very differently the claims and service of Jehovah to answer and do. "Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the Bridegroom is with them," I may call to mind, in connection with this. When He is taken away, then indeed they may fast (Luke v.), and ought to fast.

Surely, I may say, everything helps to shew us, that dispensational truth is the great, I say not the only, rule and manner of holiness according to God. We must "know the time," for nothing is right out of season. "The children of Issachar were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do" (1 Chron. xii. 32). Scripture is full of instruction upon this principle, and leaves us at no liberty to judge the holy and the unholy, independently of "the truth." Our godliness, our piety, in order to have a divine character, depends on our knowledge of the truth, of times and seasons as they are with God, or according to His mind in His perfect and beautiful, though changing, dispensations.

Here, however, let me say, lest I should be misunderstood, that I surely know that there are rules of right and wrong, which are essentially so, by moral necessity so; and we are not to question their authority. Conscience is ever to be respected, though it must consent to be instructed. Nature itself, has a voice at times, which we are to listen to. Surely I grant all this, though I speak of dispensational truth, as I do. For I again say, it is not the *only* rule and measure of holiness. And I will say more. I grant that all dispensations have certain *common* qualities, certain features which mark each and all of them. Let me dwell on this for a little.

In this world, which has departed from God through pride, and desire of self-exaltation, where man would have been as God, if God appear and act at all, surely He will come in a way to stain the pride of all flesh, and bring back His revolted creature to glory only in Him.

And we see, accordingly, that it is thus, or on such a principle as this, that He has *always* acted

in the midst of us, ever choosing the weak things to confound the strong, that no flesh might glory in His presence, but that he who gloried, might glory only in Him. Let dispensations change as they may, or the scene shift as it may, this is always seen.

The Patriarchs were few, very few, in the land, and strangers there. They had not so much as to set their foot on, going from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people; yet did He suffer no man to do them wrong, reproving even kings for their sakes, and saying, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm" (Ps. cv.).

When His elect became a nation, they were the fewest of all people, not worthy of a memorial or place in the records of the world; but they multiplied in spite of Egyptian task-masters, and then flourished into a kingdom, and became the centre of the earth and its nations, in spite of all the enmity that surrounded them. Their victories were gained by instruments of the most perfect weakness: lamps and pitchers, ox-goads, jaw bones, and slings, doing the work of the army and the war-horse, the sword and the shield; while two would put ten thousand to flight, and trumpets of rams' horns pull down the walls of hostile cities.

And so, when times change altogether, when the nation is broken up because of its sin, and a ministry of grace and salvation goes forth, it is fishermen of Galilee, with their divine Lord, the son of a carpenter, at their head, that bear it abroad to the cities and villages of the land.

And so again, when the apostle of the Gentiles comes to speak of ministry in his day, he tells us of the weakness and foolishness of God proving stronger and wiser than man, and points to the church at Corinth as the witness of this same prin-

ciple which we have traced from the beginning ; that God was humbling the flesh or man, and making Himself our glory and boast (1. Cor. i.-iii). And he then lets us know, that he was acting on this same principle himself, as in company with God—for he was among the Corinthians in weakness and in fear, as a minister of Christ, not using excellency of speech or of wisdom ; but that, in the midst of this his weakness, he carried a secret with him, a glorious, wondrous secret, beyond the reach of the eye or the ear or the heart of the princes of this world. Gideon and Samson and David knew the victory that was before them in their day, though they went forth to the battle with lamps and pitchers, with the jaw-bone of an ass, or with a sling and a stone ; and such an one was Paul with his treasures of light in the Spirit, though he was in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.

But this, rather by the way, I will now come again nearer to ourselves and to my subject.

In the New Testament, we have the present dispensation presented to us in three successive conditions. *First*—the churches, as such, are seen under the pastoral care of the Spirit in Paul—as is witnessed by his epistles to them. *Secondly*—they are challenged as candlesticks, or as churches under responsibility ; and they are called to give an account of themselves, by the Son of man who appears before them in bright, burning, judicial glory—as we see in Rev. i.-iii. *Thirdly*—they are, as it were, lost in Christendom, no longer nourished and disciplined as churches, or challenged as candlesticks, but meeting as Christendom (the corrupted wordly thing in the earth which calls itself by the name of Christ), the judgement of the Lord—as we see in Rev. iv.-xix. (cf. 1 Pet. iv. 17).

These are three eras in the story or progress of the dispensation, three phases which it bears successively.

I ask—Do not many things connected with Christian place and service and duty change with these changing aspects of our age, as they did in like changing eras in the story of Israel? From the simplest analogy, yea, from moral necessity, I might answer, surely. But a meditation on the two epistles to Timothy will determine this for us, and give us to know, that this is the divine good-pleasure concerning us.

The first of these two epistles contemplates the churches in the *first* of the conditions I have noticed above; that is, as under the pastoral care of the Spirit through the apostle. The second of them contemplates, I believe, the saints in the interval between the *second* and *third*; that is, between the challenge of the candlesticks and the judgment of Christendom—this assuming that the challenge has ended in conviction and dismissal or removal.

It may, however, be asked, is such an assumption warranted? Yes, I say, fully—because the challenge of His steward by the Lord, in each and every dispensation, at all times, and under all circumstances, has ever so ended; that is, in conviction and dismissal. Man in a responsible relation to God has never had an answer for his Lord. None, entrusted of Him with any deposit, have ever been found faithful, but He of whom it is written, "all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him amen" (2 Cor. i. 20). "Give an account of thy stewardship" has always ended in the stewardship being taken away (Luke xvi). If "God stand in the congregation of the mighty," if "He judge among the gods," the conviction will

surely be pronounced, "they know not neither will they understand, they walk on in darkness, all the foundations of the earth are out of course;" and the sentence will be delivered, "ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes" (Ps.lxxxii).

So that the challenge of the candlesticks in Rev. i.-iii. must be assumed to have ended in conviction and dismissal. And to establish this as a fact, I may refer to John himself in those chapters. He is a kind of representative of the churches or candlesticks, and he is set before the Lord Jesus, the Son of man, as One that was walking among them as a Judge, shining before John in bright, burning judicial glory. Had He appeared to John as a Judge of *the world* John would have stood; for he had already learnt and taught that "we have boldness in the day of judgment" (1. John iv. 17). But He was standing among *the candlesticks*, and before John as representing them; and this was overwhelming. As one dead, he falls at the feet of such a Judge, such a glory. He came short of it—he had no answer for it—the blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, would do for him as a sinner but not as a steward—he is overwhelmed and falls at His feet as one dead. Just like Isaiah in like conditions; for when the Throne of Jehovah set itself before him in judicial glory for the challenge of Israel, the prophet cries out, "Woe is me, for I am undone!"

All join in telling us what the end of this challenge must be. The steward is called to give an account of his stewardship, and it comes to pass again, as it had ever done before, that he is no longer steward. The stewardship is taken away—the dispensation is in ruins—and upon this, the long and dreary age of Christendom, of a corrupt and ruined dispensation, begins to take its course,

as it is still doing in this our day, and, as it will do, in growing corruption of every form, and multiplied confusion in every place, till it end in the judgement of Christendom as the specially guilty thing on the earth, under the eye of God.

Now, the second epistle to Timothy anticipates, as I believe, and as I have already said, this interval—the era between the challenge of the candlesticks (and their consequent removal) and the judgment of Christendom.*

And let me here turn aside for a moment just to say, that we ought to acquaint ourselves with the mysteries of this dispensation, as the Lord Jesus told His disciples in His day, that they ought to know "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xiii. 11). We ought to know the course, and the changes, and the successive phases through which it was to pass, for otherwise we cannot be dully instructed scribes to bring out of our treasures the old things and the new things of God, according to "His manifold wisdom."

To return, however, to the two epistles to Timothy, of which I was speaking, and to give them a little closer inspection. We know not what time intervened between the writing of these two epistles, but it is likely that it was considerable; for Paul was at large, abroad in active ministry, when he wrote the first of them; but he was a prisoner at Rome, having already appeared before

* From the epistle of James to that of Jude (and this includes all which are not Paul's), the churches have receded from the eye of the Spirit; inasmuch as it is not churches, but saints personally or individually considered, that He is then and there addressing. It was otherwise in Paul's epistles. And this further prepares us for the challenge of the characters in Rev. i.-iii., and their consequent disappearing.

Caesar, to answer for himself, when he wrote the second. And Timothy was at Ephesus when the first of these was addressed and sent to him; but we cannot say, with any certainty, where he was when he received the second.

But then, when we further look at the two, and compare them still for a little longer, we find in the first of them that the house is called "the house of God, the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth—while, in the second, the house is compared to "a great house" in which "are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and earth; some to honour and some to dishonour" and that one must needs purge oneself from these vessels to dishonour, if one would be "a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

And further still, in the progress of this same epistle, he speaks of Jannes and Jambres, likening the day which that epistle contemplates to the day of those adversaries. For Satan was then, in Christendom, purposing to neutralize the truth, by putting it into strange company or with evil admixtures, as he was doing with those magicians in the day of Moses, and thus blinding the conscience whether of the king of Egypt, or of the world.

What a premonition of that which has come to pass! What is Christendom but the scene of such admixtures as have neutralized the power of the truth! These and kindred marks shew us, that the dispensation was contemplated as under different conditions, as the apostle was writing these two epistles. In the first of them, the light in the candlestick is fed and trimmed—in the second, the candlestick has been removed.

But is this to be a surprise to us? Are we to think that the steward of God in this age would have proved faithful, since every other steward of His, from the beginning hitherto, as we have already seen, had been judged and set aside? The church was to have been under her Lord, and in the Spirit, the light of the world, the pillar and ground of the truth. But she has become worse than darkness—a false beacon on the hill that has betrayed the traveller. But Adam the steward of Eden, at the beginning; then Noah, lord of the world that now is; and then Israel the husbandman of the vineyard in Judea, had already been found wanting. The king had failed ere this, the priest, the prophet—and now the candlestick. It is a tale told again and again: the unfaithfulness of man as responsible to God, the steward called to give in his account, and that ending in the stewardship being taken away from him. The house of prayer, so to speak, has always become a den of thieves.

But further, as to the course of dispensations. In each of them, while each was still subsisting, there has been separation after separation. See this in Israel,—Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah, were, each of them, returned captives, a separated remnant who, with their companions, left Babylon. But the day came, the day of the prophet Malachi, when “they that feared the Lord” had to separate from the returned captives, and “speak often one to another,” as though they had been *another* remnant (Mal. iii).

So in Christendom. The Reformation, for instance, was a time of separation. But from the persistive, growing, and accredited corruption which still or again prevailed, further withdrawing or separation has again and again had to take

place. The return from Babylon did not secure purity in Israel—the Reformation has not recovered it and kept it in Christendom. The emptied, swept and garnished house has not done for the Lord Jesus. He has found no habitation for His glory there. The unclean spirit, the spirit of idolatry, may have gone out from Israel, for there were no idols or high places in the land after the return from Babylon; but Israel was not healed: for infidel insolence, the challenges of the proud and scornful, were heard there fearfully. And what else, I ask, if not this again, in the Reformation-times of Christendom? Read the prophet Malachi, and look around at the moral condition of things under the eye, and mark the wondrous analogies that there are in the stories of corruption and confusion in man's world, whether there or here, whether then or now, whether in Israel or in Christendom, whether in our day, or 2,000 years ago. Is it not so?

When we come into the book of the Apocalypse, after contemplating the different aspects of the dispensation in the two epistles to Timothy, we find, as I have anticipated already, the Lord *challenging* and *judging*; challenging the candlesticks and judging the world—in other words, judging the candlesticks by setting them aside, judging the world by the avenging destructions of His own day.

In the first three chapters, we get the first of these actions. The churches, as candlesticks, or as in their responsible place and character, are summoned to give an account of themselves. The Son of man walks among them in judicial glory. They had been previously fed and disciplined by the Spirit in the apostles, as churches of saints, elect bodies; but here they are, as candlesticks,

such as were responsible to shine as lights in the world, being set of God for that end, challenged and arraigned—according to which, the Son of man begins His address to each of them with these words, “I know thy works.” And as we have already seen, that no steward has ever had an answer for God, when challenged to give an account of his stewardship, this challenge of the candlesticks must be assumed to have ended in conviction and dismissal.

And now, dear reader, may we not, in view of what has been before us, ask ourselves, what influence and authority the truth has over us; and seek grace from Him who is “The God of all grace,” and who “giveth more grace” that there may not be on our part the mere assent of the intellect, but that we may be found holding the truth in communion with the Lord, mindful of the fact that the exclusive or disproportionate study of dispensational truth may engender the knowledge which puffeth up to the weakening of the love that buildeth up; and likewise remembering what another has said that “the *dispensational* aspect of truth must be secondary to that which is *eternal*.”



THE POWER OF A LITTLE TRUTH.

“I desire to know the *power* of a little truth, rather, far rather, than to increase the *stock* of truths.”

This, beloved, is surely a “desire” which it would be profitable for us all to have, and to know the accomplishment of in our experience.

There is a great danger in these days, of abundant information, of gathering mere *geological* specimens of truth, if I may so express it, and having

a fine *stock* of them in our heads, instead of having them in our hearts, in the power of the unction from the Holy One, teaching us in such a way, as to humble us, and fill us with real knowledge of our blessed Lord Jesus.

Oh my soul ! dost thou really know in the grace and power of the Holy Ghost, the truths which thou hast learned? *Extract.*



FRAGMENT.

If ever there was a day when it is important for every true follower of Christ to stand fast and to be true to his profession, I believe it is the present day. There is no answer to infidelity like the life of Christ displayed by the Christian. Nothing puts the madness of the infidel, and the folly of the superstitious more to shame and silence than the humble, quiet, devoted walk of a thorough-going, heavenly-minded, and divinely-taught Christian. It may be in the unlearned, and poor, and despised ; but like the scent of the lowly violet, it gives its fragrance abroad, and both God and man take notice of it. Works, if only hypocritical doings, go for nothing ; but works that are the genuine expression of living and walking with God in Christ, are of the same value as the hands of a good clock. A good clock without hands is, for practical purposes, of no value ; but the hands on the face tell the measure of the value of the works within, and record the lapse of time. " We are His (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them " (Ephes. ii. 10). Now is the time for works, and for overcoming, to him that has an ear to hear.