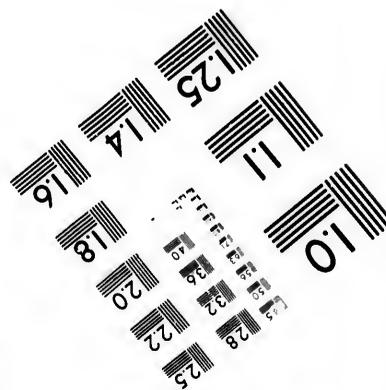
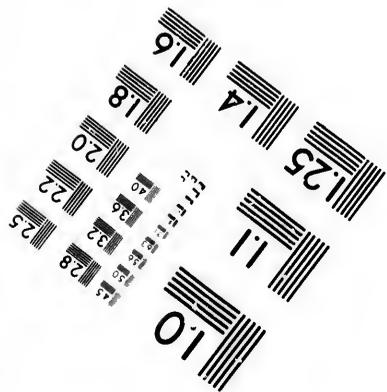
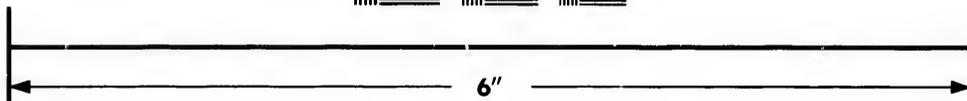
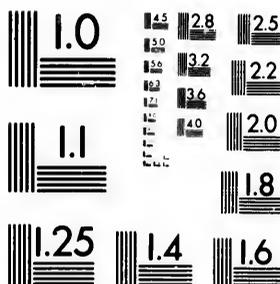


**IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (MT-3)**



**Photographic
Sciences
Corporation**

23 WEST MAIN STREET
WEBSTER, N.Y. 14580
(716) 872-4503

25
28
32
36
40
44
48
52
56
60
64
68
72
76
80
84
88
92
96
100

**CIHM/ICMH
Microfiche
Series.**

**CIHM/ICMH
Collection de
microfiches.**



Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques

10
01

© 1982

Technical and Bibliographic Notes/Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coloured covers/
Couverture de couleur | <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured pages/
Pages de couleur |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Covers damaged/
Couverture endommagée | <input type="checkbox"/> Pages damaged/
Pages endommagées |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Covers restored and/or laminated/
Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée | <input type="checkbox"/> Pages restored and/or laminated/
Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cover title missing/
Le titre de couverture manque | <input type="checkbox"/> Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/
Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured maps/
Cartes géographiques en couleur | <input type="checkbox"/> Pages detached/
Pages détachées |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/
Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire) | <input type="checkbox"/> Showthrough/
Transparence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured plates and/or illustrations/
Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of print varies/
Qualité inégale de l'impression |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bound with other material/
Relié avec d'autres documents | <input type="checkbox"/> Includes supplementary material/
Comprend du matériel supplémentaire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion
along interior margin/
La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la
distortion le long de la marge intérieure | <input type="checkbox"/> Only edition available/
Seule édition disponible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blank leaves added during restoration may
appear within the text. Whenever possible, these
have been omitted from filming/
Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées
lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte,
mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont
pas été filmées. | <input type="checkbox"/> Pages wholly or partially obscured by errata
slips, tissues, etc., have been refilmed to
ensure the best possible image/
Les pages totalement ou partiellement
obscurcies par un feuillet d'errata, une pelure,
etc., ont été filmées à nouveau de façon à
obtenir la meilleure image possible. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional comments:/
Commentaires supplémentaires: | |

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below/
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X	12X	14X	16X	18X	20X	22X	24X	26X	28X	30X	32X
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

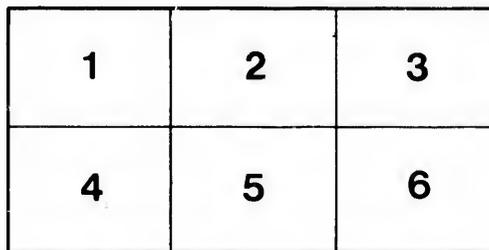
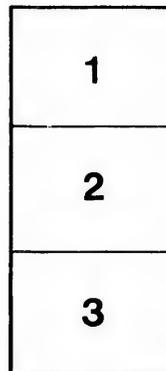
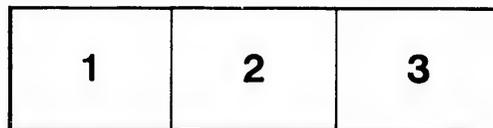
Library of Congress
Photoduplication Service

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol \rightarrow (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol ∇ (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

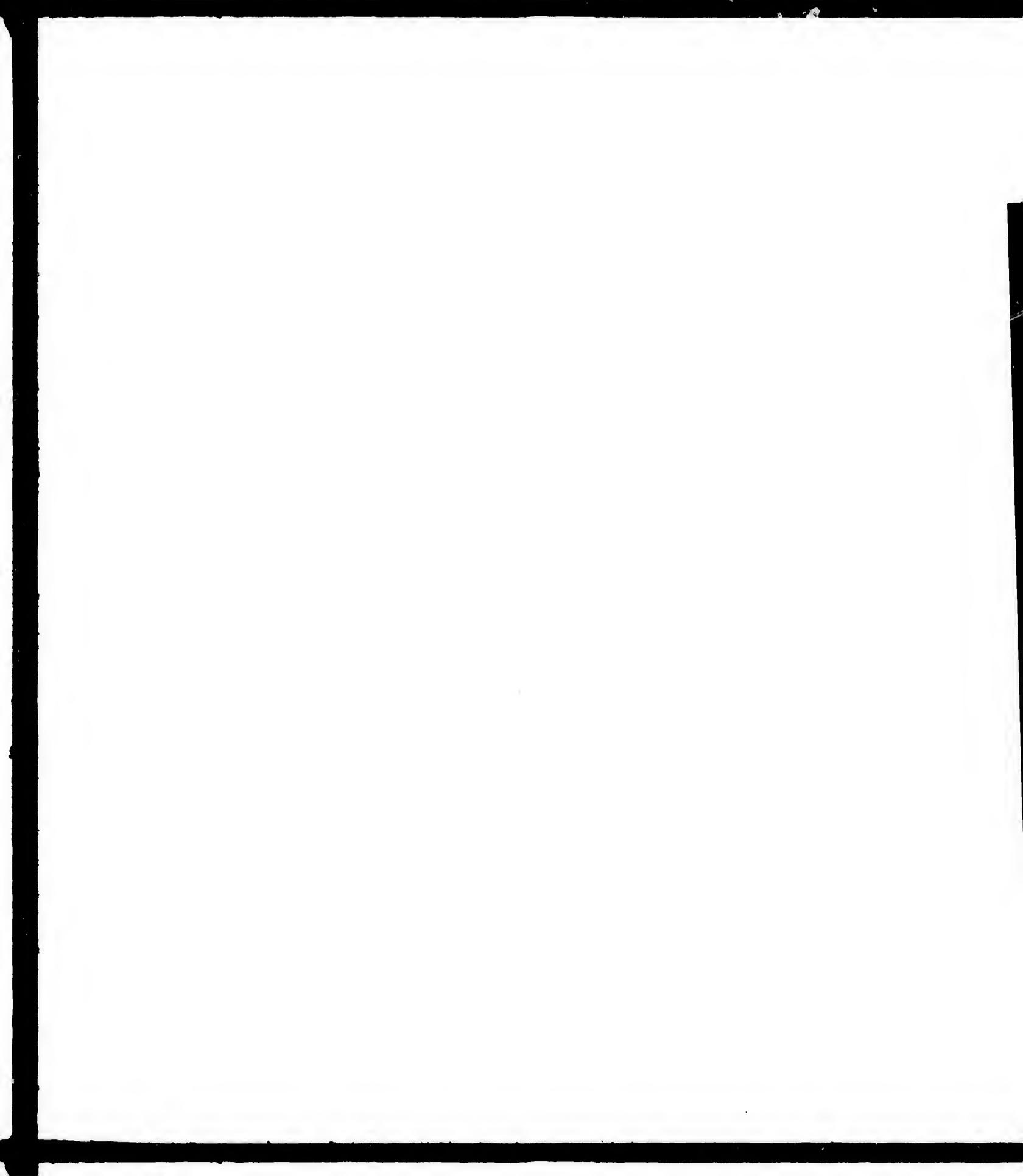
Library of Congress
Photoduplication Service

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

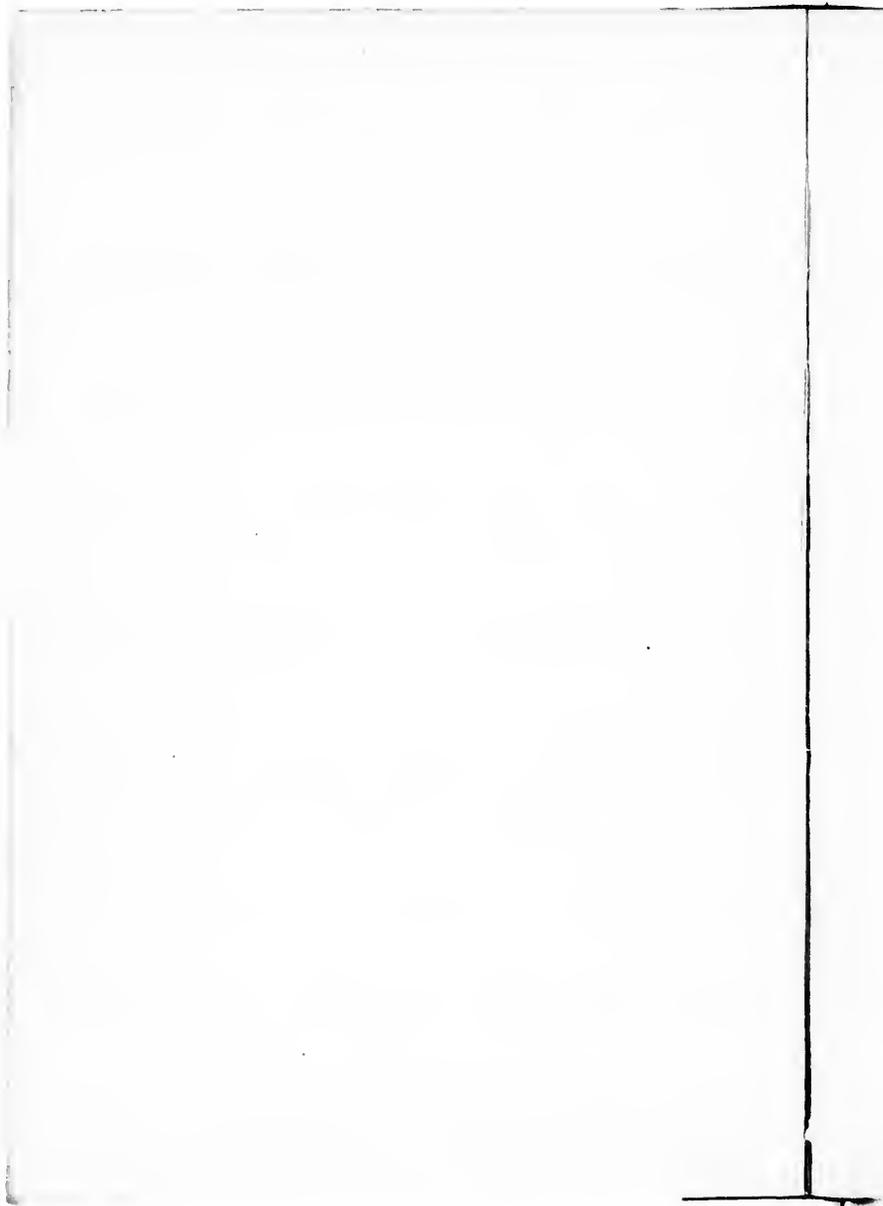
Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole \rightarrow signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole ∇ signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.



BV
4501
0885



Peace

PRINTED BY
SPOTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
LONDON

Peace
and its hindrances.

BY THE
RIGHT REV. ASHTON OXENDEN,
formerly Bishop of Montreal.

THE
OF

LONDON:
LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO.
AND NEW YORK: 15 EAST 16th STREET.

1391.

All rights reserved.

BV4501
.0885

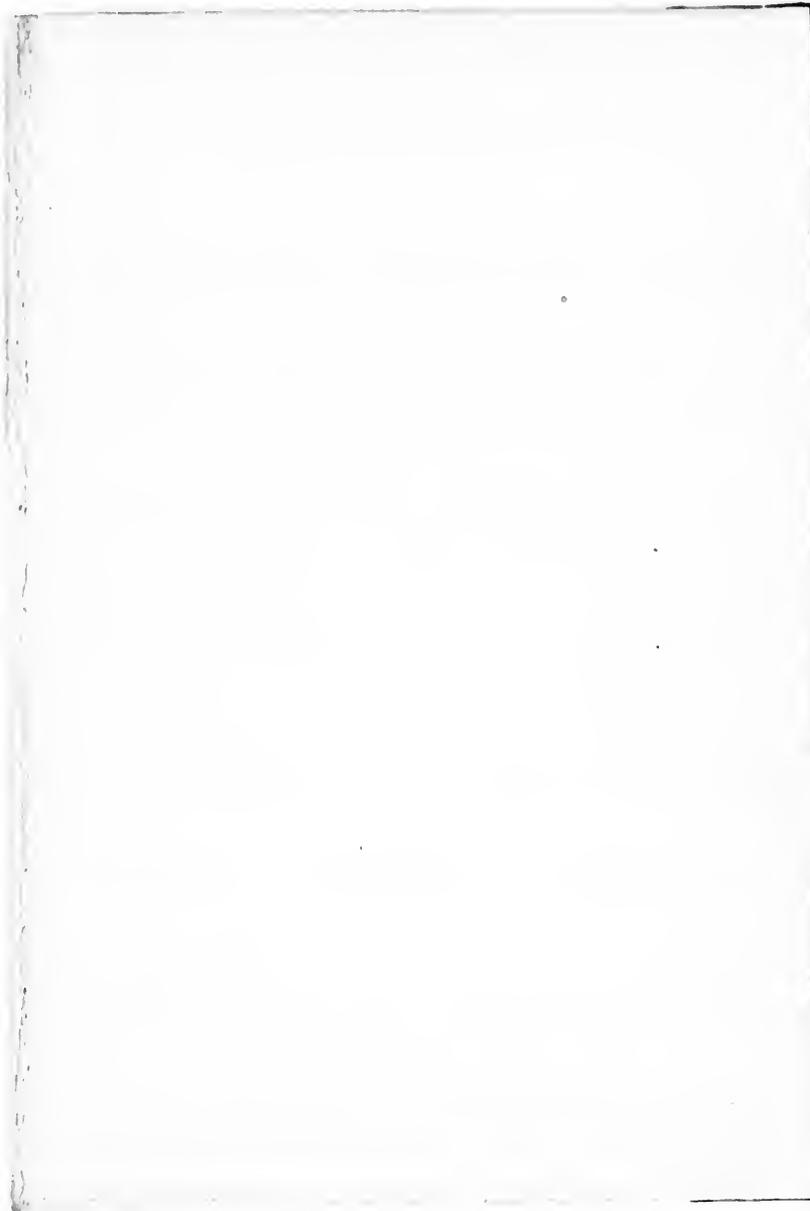
Recd. Mike 11/24/88

63658
'01

THE LIBRARY
OF CONGRESS

Recd. from 11/18/58

TO
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCESS FREDERICA,
BARONESS VON PAWEL-RAMMINGEN,
WHO GRACIOUSLY EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN THE
SUBSTANCE OF THIS LITTLE BOOK,
THE FOLLOWING PAGES
ARE,
BY HER KIND PERMISSION,
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.



A
un
ob

su
re
me

su
th
ca
is

sp
ca
re

I

PREFACE

A LITTLE BOOK has been lately published under the title of 'Pax Vobiscum,' and has obtained a very large circulation.

The authorship of this book is quite sufficient to commend it to the Christian reader, but still more so the mine of precious metal which it contains.

As there is still much to be said on this subject, I have been emboldened to put forth the accompanying treatise by way of amplification, dwelling chiefly on this question, Why is not this peace ours?

My humble prayer is that the Peace spoken of in both these works may be earnestly sought and happily realised by the reader.

A. O.

BIARRITZ: *March 14, 1891.*

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE LEGACY OF CHRIST	1
II. FIRST HINDRANCE: NOT APPLYING TO THE TRUE SOURCE OF PEACE	6
III. SECOND HINDRANCE: THE RETENTION OF SOME SIN IN THE HEART	11
IV. THIRD HINDRANCE: UNBELIEF	17
V. THIRD HINDRANCE (<i>continued</i>): INVOLUNTARY UNBELIEF	26
VI. FOURTH HINDRANCE: THE CARES AND PLEASURES OF THE WORLD	32
VII. FIFTH HINDRANCE: THE DEFECTIVE OBSER- VANCE OF GOD'S ORDINANCES	37
VIII. FIFTH HINDRANCE (<i>continued</i>): DEFECTIVE BIBLE-READING AND PRAYER	44
IX. CONCLUSION	49

	PAGE
...	1
...NG TO THE	6
...ENTION OF	11
...	17
...VOLUNTARY	26
...ARES AND	32
...IVE OBSER-	37
...DEFECTIVE	44
...	49

PEACE

AND ITS HINDRANCES



CHAPTER I.

THE LEGACY OF CHRIST.

WHAT is Peace? We read much of it in the Bible, and we see something of it in the varied picture of human life. It is the calm and settled happiness, which has its abiding-place deep down in the Christian's heart. It is the quiet repose of the soul which has found relief and satisfaction in Christ, and exists even amidst the trials and worries of this turbulent world.

We sometimes see the mighty ocean lashed by storms, and tossed to and fro. But if we could look beneath the surface, we should find a calmness and rest ever reigning there, uninfluenced by the upper currents, and unruffled by the tempests which rage above. Such is the Christian's Peace, amidst the turmoil of the outer world.

Again, there is a difference between Peace and Joy. One is the nasty ebullition of a glad heart; the other is the staid, settled happiness of the inner soul. The one is evanescent, and soon leaves us, like the momentary blaze of thorns under a pot, which kindles a spasmodic flame for an instant, and then goes out: the other has an abiding-place within us. The one has usually a sudden rise, and is perhaps as suddenly checked; the

other is deep and lasting. The one is like the clear, sparkling outpour of a spring which issues from the mountain-side; the other is like that same spring in its calm, quiet course, as it threads its way through the valley below. The World often affords us Joy; Christ alone gives us Peace.

Peace is the privilege and inheritance of God's people. Both present Peace and future Peace are theirs—imperfect Peace now, and perfect Peace hereafter. It is a Grant from above, from the Lord Himself. It was the parting Legacy to His chosen ones. 'Peace' (said the Saviour) 'I leave with you; my peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth, give I unto you.' It *may* be the portion of us all; and yet how many come short of it, either from not seeking for

it where it is to be found, or forfeiting it owing to some faults of theirs.

In 2 Kings ix. we read of Joram, the wicked King of Israel, sending his messengers to Jehu with this inquiry; 'Is it peace?' Jehu at once replies, somewhat angrily; 'What hast thou to do with peace?' Certainly neither Jehu nor the Israelitish king knew anything of *real* Peace; nor can we, if we are the enemies of God, as they were; for 'there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.'

But among those who are not like Joram and Jehu, but who are outwardly serving God, and are classed among His people, how few live in the full enjoyment of Peace. I would go even further, and ask, Is there not a lack of it even in the religious world—even among those who know Christ, and

are in a measure trying to be His true and loving followers?

And why so? I shall speak in the following chapters of the Impediments which prevent its presence in our hearts.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST HINDRANCE.

Not applying to the true Source of Peace.

SOME are anxious to obtain Peace, but they seek for it where it can never be found—in some self-imposed work, in the strict performance of certain duties, or in the vain hope of attaining a fancied excellence which they never reach, or, still oftener, in their lax and careless walk with God.

They forget that Christ has the bestowal of it: it comes from Him. He is 'our Peace.' He is 'the Prince of Peace.' He has purchased it for us through the blood of His

Cross ; and it is by believing in Him, and following His steps, that it is obtained. ' Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.'

When Jesus was on the Sea of Galilee with His disciples, you remember that a fearful storm arose, and the sea was lashed by its fury ; upon which the Saviour rose up, and with sovereign majesty rebuked the waves, and in an instant the ruffled water was still, and there was a great calm. And He too is the Sovereign Agent, the prime Originator, of Peace within us. He forgives. He calms the troubled soul.

Again, the Woman who was a sinner came, in deep penitence and anguish of soul, to our Lord, mourning over her past sinful life, and casting herself down before Him with a sorrow not to be mistaken. And Jesus, knowing the depth of her need and the

reality of her love, turning to her, said ; 'Thy sins be forgiven thee ; thy faith hath saved thee ; *go in peace.*'

And we also in our Church Prayers say ; 'O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us *thy peace.*' And, again, in one of our beautiful Collects we are taught to pray ; 'Grant, we beseech thee, merciful Lord, to thy faithful people *pardon and peace,* that they may be cleansed from all their sins, and serve thee with a quiet mind, through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

We must wake up to a consciousness of the guilt and misery of sin, and then flee as penitents to the Cross. 'Sorrow for sin (says an old writer) is the sorrow that brings with it the most direct blessing. Sorrow for lost Riches will not bring them back. Sorrow for lost Friends will not raise them

up. Sorrow in Sickness will not cure, but rather increase it. But sorrow for *Sin* brings Health and Peace to the soul.'

Yes, sorrow for sin is the first step in our heavenward course; and then the next step is to go direct to Christ, and apply to Him for that Pardon and Peace, which the world cannot give, but which He can.

But when Christ pardons, although a new joy springs up in the heart, a real joy, an inward joy, the happy feeling that a load has been removed, and an intolerable weight taken off the soul, the settled Peace of which I have been speaking is not yet enjoyed. It is an *after-blessing*. The stream does not at once acquire a calm and peaceful course, nor will your soul immediately settle down into that calmness and rest which is the portion of the true and advanced

Believer, who lives henceforth not unto himself, but unto his Lord.

From Christ then alone does our Peace come. It flows from Him as from the smitten Rock. He left it as a precious legacy to His true disciples, and He still most graciously bestows it ; it is their inheritance and reward. They receive it as a gift ; not, perhaps, on their first access to Him, but *afterwards*, as the result of their confiding trust in Him, and their loving obedience to His will.

unto him-

our Peace
from the
ous legacy
still most
nheritance
gift ; not,
Him, but
confiding
edience to

CHAPTER III.

SECOND HINDRANCE.

The Retention of some Sin in the Heart.

ON our first reception of Christ, when we turn to Him in earnest, and when He welcomes us to His bosom as penitents, He bids us live henceforth a new and changed life, a life of faithful obedience, a life of holy freedom, and also of devoted service. He seems to say to the liberated soul ; ' Now go and sin no more. Thou hast been set free ; be not entangled again in the snares of sin. Thou hast been washed and cleansed ; wallow not

again in the mire. Keep thy garments white, unspotted by any stains of evil.'

Thus, St. Paul asks; 'Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?' And he himself answers the question; 'God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?' And in this spirit our Church teaches us to pray; 'For thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please thee in *newness of life*, to the honour and glory of thy Name.' And again; 'Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give, that we may pass our time in *rest and quietness*.'

Let me ask you, Have you learnt, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, to feel 'the exceeding sinfulness' of sin? and have you fled to the Cross for mercy? Well is it if you

have ; but be upon your guard, be watchful. For alas how apt we are to keep back some cherished sin ; some secret sin, it may be ; a little one perhaps, one that has clung to us so long that we cannot bear to part with it.

And thus our repentance is incomplete. It is as when the Surgeon's knife is applied to some deep wound within us ; the sore is apparently extracted from the quivering flesh, and the healing process begins. And yet something mars our eventual cure. The pain returns, and the patient still suffers. The fact is, that a portion of the disease was left untouched ; the operation was incomplete.

So it is sometimes with the Conversion of the soul. We bitterly repent, and turn to God. We give up sin in the main, and try to live a happy Christian life ; but perhaps there is some sin, some little sin, some secret

bosom-sin, which is still allowed to remain undisturbed. And thus our repentance is made void, and the Peace of God is effectually prevented from ruling in our hearts.

The consequence is that God, who sees through it all, withholds His blessing. Our prayers are hindered. There is a cloud which shuts Him out from us. We are not accepted. We see *others* getting on ; but there is something that keeps *us* back. *Their* Peace flows as a river, smoothly and noiselessly ; but it is not so with *us*. No ; and it never will be until every sin is put away ; for until then our own hearts will be ever condemning us, and we shall have no confiding trust in God.

We sometimes see persons whose feelings are naturally warm, and easily moved. They appear to be in earnest ; but the heated iron soon cools, and they are drawn back to their

sins by some trifling enticement: whereas, if their repentance had been genuine, 'not even crowns and kingdoms would have allured them back into the path of evil.'

Before then I go any further, I beseech you, my dear reader, to look closely into your own heart, and see if there be any hidden fault concealed there; and, if so, root it out immediately. There must be no hesitation, and no compromise with the smallest sin.

God abhors every evil; and we should be very careful lest we offend Him. It was said of an old Grecian philosopher, that when once accused of cowardice, he replied, 'Yes, I am the greatest coward in the world; for I fear God, and dare not do the smallest wrong.'

You may be sure of this, that if sin be allowed a place within us, it will exercise a

painful dominion over us, and cast a shadow over our inward life. Be very severe then with yourself. Be very sensitive in the matter of right and wrong. And whilst the conscience of some is so blunted and dull that they can live unconcerned under the weight of almost any sin, do thou avoid the most trifling fault, and try by God's help to live a holy and blameless life, remembering Him who was pure and spotless, 'like a beautiful pearl which no breath of man can tarnish.'

Our earnest and constant prayer to Christ, 'the Rock of Ages,' should be:—

Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the *double* cure;
Cleanse me from its *guilt* and *power*.

Then, if so cleansed, we shall enjoy Peace
—Christ's Peace.

t a shadow
evere then
ve in the
and whilst
unted and
rned under
thou avoid
God's help
remembering
ss, 'like a
of man can
er to Christ,
d,
ver.
enjoy Peace

CHAPTER IV.

THIRD HINDRANCE.

Unbelief.

THE Prophet Isaiah says ; 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever.' Now, how can we trust in God, and stay our minds on Him, so long as there is any Unbelief rankling in our hearts? This is enough to prevent all trust, all confidence, all repose. Our minds will be adrift, swaying to and fro, unless we possess a sure and solid anchorage.

This Unbelief then is a Third Hindrance in the way of Peace.

Now, there are two kinds of Unbelief. The one is open, decided, and declared : it is, in fact, nothing less than sheer Infidelity. The other is less open : it is plausible and undermining ; and although expressed with delicacy and caution, it is almost as fatal as the other.

Of the former of these I am not going to speak ; namely, the wilful, full-blown Unbelief of those who glory in their infidel opinions, and make a boast of them openly ; for they, of course, make no effort to obtain Peace. It cannot possibly be theirs ; they lay no claim to it.

The last era was one of spiritual deadness ; the present is an age of Doubts and Semi-unbelief ; and the Christian has need to

be well-armed to resist the evil that is all around him. In former days Unbelief scarcely dared to show itself. It lay buried in the heart of its votaries ; for they feared openly to promulgate their comfortless opinions. Such men as Hume and Hobbes, Lord Rochester and Voltaire, did Satan's work ; but they met with the condemnation of all who were in any measure right-minded.

But now the state of things is altered. Scepticism has assumed a different aspect. Its views, when held with a certain degree of refinement, are tolerated. They have even become fashionable ; and men flaunt their contempt for the old lines marked out by the pen of inspiration. They speak disparagingly of God's Word, compare its utterances with the light of modern science, and question the possibility of Miracles.

Persons of cultivated minds, and in whom perhaps there is a little dash of scientific knowledge, express their opinions boldly in the very heart of society, in drawing-rooms and at dinner-tables, and perhaps still more commonly in pleasing and attractive novels, whose writers do not openly attack the Word of God, but insidiously impugn its authority.

There is often a certain mixture of religiousness introduced into their conversation or writings to make them palatable, like sugar sprinkled upon the nauseous pill. They speak of Nature's God, for whom they profess much reverence, and of a Father who is full of mercy ; but they ignore His redeeming love in the person of Christ, thus 'denying even the Lord who bought them.' Truly 'their words are softer than butter ; but war is in their hearts : their words are smoother

than oil ; yet are they drawn swords.' And if they can but unsettle the minds of the weak and wavering, they are content ; for having lost their own faith, their aim is to undermine the faith of others.

And this evil is, I believe, spreading. Never perhaps did the Church of England shine more brightly ; never was she more active and more to the front ; never was she doing more for her Lord than she is doing now ; but she is surrounded by dangers—dangers without and dangers within. And I cannot help thinking that the greatest of all these dangers is the spirit of Infidelity which is secretly arraying itself against our Lord. This is the Church's *real* danger. In this quarter of the sky is the tempest really gathering. This is the canker-worm which is threatening to eat away her vitals. The true

source of peril is to be found in that general weakening of all religious faith, which prevails not in England only but throughout Christendom.

And observe this : do we not read in Holy Scripture of Sin and Unbelief as marking the latter days of the Christian Church ; that 'there will come a falling away first' ; and then that 'the Son of Perdition will be revealed,' 'whose coming is with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved' ?

It does indeed seem as if this prediction was being fulfilled. There may be (God grant that it may not be so in our day)—but I say there may be before us a dreary winter of Unbelief, the beginning of the end, when there shall be a shrivelling up of

every particle of spiritual life, except in those who have found Christ, and are decidedly His; for remember it is also written in Scripture; 'When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?'

Let us be upon our guard then. Let us (as the Prophet says) 'stand upon our watch, and set us upon the tower; let us watch, and see what the Lord is saying to us, and what we shall answer when we are reprov'd.' There is a Vortex; let us not be drawn into it. There is a Pitfall; let us not blindly rush onward—not an open pitfall, but a concealed one, covered over with a few leaves of moral truth, so as to hide it from our sight.

We should avoid all contact with such persons, as we would avoid those who have a contagious disease upon them; and be

careful also to guard those who are dear to us from intercourse with them. They may not be persons of much weight; but still they may succeed in pulling down the fabric of the weak and unstable. Their own shallowness does not remove the danger. Moths are insignificant Insects, but if undetected they will in a very short time fret our most substantial garments into holes, and destroy their texture.

To Parents especially I would say, Take care of your Children. Hedge them around with a strong fence of truth. Give them good Friends and good Books—something definite to cling to. Let the realities of God's eternal truth be stamped upon their souls, and by His help be embedded there. And then they will be strong to resist every foe, whether the attack comes

with open enmity, or with the semblance of friendship.

Depend upon it, those who hold these views, or who listen to them without abhorrence, cannot enjoy the Peace which the Saviour promises. They are directly thrusting it from them. It cannot be theirs.

CHAPTER V.

THIRD HINDRANCE (*continued*).

Involuntary Unbelief.

I CANNOT dismiss the subject of Unbelief, as a most serious hindrance to our Christian Peace, without adding a word of caution, and yet of encouragement and comfort, to those of my brethren who know and truly love God, but who may be smarting under the power of Unbelief, which they hate, and from which they earnestly long to be freed.

There is such a thing as *Involuntary* Unbelief, which sometimes assails even God's

dearest children, and disturbs their Peace. You may not have felt this; God may have spared you from its assaults. If so be very thankful for His great mercy.

But be upon your guard; for though the wave may not yet have reached you, the tide is coming in. You may at present be altogether free from any doubts; but, should they come, be prepared. God sometimes permits Satan to inject them into the minds of His dearest servants. There is a kind of Unbelief which is apt to spring up occasionally even in *their* hearts, and to disturb for a season the peace and comfort of their souls. It is like a passing Blight, which sweeps across the trusting, loving heart, and for a while hides the full light of the Sun of Righteousness. It mingles with the

inued).

of Unbelief,
our Christian
of caution,
comfort, to
ow and truly
harting under
h they hate,
y long to be

s *Involuntary*
ils even God's

Christian's faith, and impedes his flow of happiness. It is a most painful intruder.

I will mention two examples of this Involuntary Unbelief, or Weakness of Faith.

One is that of the Apostle Thomas. His was a doubt which gave him real pain, and which he would most gladly have been without. He loved his Lord, and desired to believe in His Resurrection; but he hesitated to accept the truth; and so he asked for further evidence. And when this request was mercifully granted, he was fully satisfied, and was greatly relieved, exclaiming, with holy rapture: 'My Lord and my God!'

Such too was the feeling of the Father who brought his Son to Jesus when possessed of an evil spirit. Being questioned by our Lord as to his amount of faith, he replied,

somewhat hesitatingly; 'Lord, I believe;' but adds this prayer, 'Help thou mine unbelief.'

So it may be with us. We may be thus harassed by unbelieving doubts, which crop up when least expected, making a painful inroad upon our Peace, and sorely hindering us in our upward flight.

If then it should come, regard it as a *Temptation*, and resist it, looking up to God for strength. He may perhaps permit it in order to try your stability and your allegiance. He may allow you thus to pass through the furnace, that 'the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried in the fire, may be found unto praise, and honour, and glory.' And most assuredly 'He will, with the temptation, make a way for you to escape.'

In any case, kneel down, and bring your infirmity before God, especially the infirmity of your faith. Cast yourself upon Christ. Entreat Him to expel that 'evil heart of unbelief' which troubles you, and to give you a heart to trust Him, and to rejoice in His salvation. Say unto Him, as in the case that I have mentioned; 'Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief'; or as the disciples prayed; 'Lord, increase our faith.'

These whisperings of doubt must needs greatly interfere with the calmness and peace of your Christian course. They are as Boulders in the river's bed, impeding its onward flow.

Oh that God would remove them by His grace, and give you a strong, settled, and unwavering faith! Oh for a heart fixed on

the Eternal Rock! For then you will be at rest, and you will enjoy to the full that 'Peace which passeth all understanding,' 'joy and peace in believing.'

, and bring
specially the
yourself upon
el that 'evil
bles you, and
Him, and to
unto Him, as
oned; 'Lord,
elief'; or as
increase our

t must needs
almness and
e. They are
impeding its

them by His
settled, and
heart fixed on

CHAPTER VI.

FOURTH HINDRANCE.

The Cares and Pleasures of the World.

WORLDLY Cares are a terrible hindrance to many, standing effectually in the way of the Christian's Peace. We all have them—some more, and some less. They naturally exert a disturbing influence on our spiritual life; and in proportion as they are allowed an entrance, they drive out Peace from our hearts.

We cannot pass through this world without feeling them in some degree—Family Cares, Household Cares, Society Cares; some

one care, and some another. No one is wholly exempt.

And, I ask you, Are not these Cares sometimes almost more than we can bear? Do they not sorely distress us, and sadly interfere with that calm repose which we ought to feel? They come upon us as a flood, and fairly overwhelm us. They rise up in the morning, and forestall other and better thoughts, and keep us wakeful in the night-watches. They intrude into our private devotions; they follow us to the House of God, and haunt us even upon our knees.

I am not speaking of those *Great Cares* which occasionally assail us, and which we meet with a special effort; but of those *Little Cares*, those '*Insect Cares*,' which are continually fretting us, and are keeping up a

perpetual sore within us. It is these which interfere even more with our inward Peace.

St. Paul here comes to our aid. He does not ignore the existence of these Cares, but teaches us how to deal with them, how to weaken their power, and how to dethrone them from usurping their mastery over us. He tells us to bring *them*, as well as *all* our troubles, to Christ, and to ask Him to give us strength to overcome them: 'Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.' And our Lord Himself counsels us on the same subject in His Sermon on the Mount.

Make an effort then to put this advice into immediate practice. Leave all—the cares of the day and the anxieties of the morrow—in the Saviour's hands. And I feel sure that if we do so we shall find immense relief, and we shall be enabled to possess a

calm, quiet spirit amidst the pressure of the outer world.

But I spoke of *Worldly Pleasures* also as a further hindrance in the way of Christian Peace.

There is nothing wrong in the enjoyment of life ; but it *becomes* wrong when this present life is allowed to be all to us—in fact, when this world is in the ascendant. Recreation is not only allowable, but good for us all, so long as it is harmless. But the moment it begins to engross the heart, and to usurp the place which is due to God, and to things heavenly, then it becomes sinful, and is hurtful to the soul, superseding the enjoyment of higher things.

It may be that my reader is one of those whose hearts are so taken up and clogged with worldly pleasures that there

is no room for Christ. Let me ask you: Have you Peace? You may be light-hearted and happy without being peaceful. You may have found joy and merriment; but will it last? No; for all will soon be gone, and nothing left in you but a dreary blank. Is there not a Voice from above which whispers in your ear, 'What hast *thou* to do with Peace?'

e ask you :
be light-
g peaceful.
merriment ;
will soon be
ut a dreary
from above
What hast

CHAPTER VII.

FIFTH HINDERANCE.

The Defective Observance of God's Ordinances.

GOD has given us many Ordinances as helps to us in our Christian life. The three most prominent of these are :-

The Ordinance of the Christian Sabbath ;

The Ordinance of God's own written Word, in which He speaks to us ; and

The Ordinance of Prayer, in which we are permitted to speak to Him.

I will first speak of THE ORDINANCE OF THE SABBATH. There is no greater mistake

than to suppose that this is a mere *Jewish* Ordinance.

The opening page of the Bible is enough to dispel at once this idea from our minds. It carries us back to the beginning of things—to the very dawn of the world. We read there, that during six days the Lord accomplished the great and wondrous work of the World's Creation; and then on the Seventh day He ceased, the work being completed. That day He set apart as His own day, a special day to be yielded up to Him; 'And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it.'

This Day of Days, this Seventh portion of the week, was to be observed for ever, and by *all people*. It was certainly not a day set apart for *the Jews only*, for they were not in existence at that time. The

command concerning it was the first command from God to man. It came as His primary message to the newly-created world. It was an institution wafted, as it were, by a direct breeze from Paradise.

From that time we find this Holy Ordinance running as a golden thread through the whole texture of God's inspired Word. It appears and reappears in every part of Scripture, under the title of 'the Sabbath' in the Old Testament, and of the Lord's Day in the New, binding upon all God's people alike, and surrounded by a halo of sacredness.

The special Observance of Sunday has been the glory and safeguard of England, the brightest spot in her national history. But of late there has been a tendency to pare down its holy obligations, and to give

unto God a portion only of the day which He calls His own.

How is it with you? Do you regard it as a Consecrated Day—not as your own day, to do as you please, but as God's day, to carry out His Will—as a day to be given up to His service? Church-going is a practice observed by most of us, and formed in our very childhood; but when the Hour of Prayer is over, with how many is the sacredness of the day gone, forgotten, merged in secular'ity?

One goes to join a mere worldly party—a quiet party it may be, but still a worldly party—a meeting together of friends, from which God is not positively excluded, but into which He is rarely admitted. I am speaking, not of the poor, but of the rich, among whom this practice is becoming sadly prevalent.

Another, to whom Sunday is a wearisome day, and who longs for its leaden hours to be over, seeks to while away the tedium of its restraints by engaging in some week-day employment.

A third makes use of it as a day for travelling. He hails it as a leisure time, a day free from worldly engagements; he therefore robs God of it, diverting it from its own sacred character, and employing it for his own personal convenience.

Are not such persons acting contrary to the declared will of God, forfeiting the blessing promised, and cutting themselves off from the Saviour's Legacy of Peace? Read what is said in Holy Scripture, and especially by the prophet Isaiah; 'If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath' (may not this refer to all needless travelling?) 'from

doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable ; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words ; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord : for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.'

I know that this is a tender subject, the very mention of which is displeasing to many. But sure I am that you would despise the Christian writer who prefers the favour of his hearers to the plain declaration of God's truth, and who cares for your praise more than he cares for your soul.

I would say to all those who thus remove the landmark of God's Sabbaths, and who tread with careless foot on the ground which He has hallowed, and stamped with His own seal ; If you desire the favour of God, and if

you wish for that Peace which is your promised inheritance, beware how you dishonour Him, and treat lightly His own most blessed Ordinance.

I have dwelt on this, because I feel strongly that the Defective Observance of God's Ordinance is sapping the foundation of our Christianity, and of that Peace which might be ours.

CHAPTER VIII.

FIFTH HINDRANCE (*continued*).

Defective Bible-reading and Prayer.

I TAKE it for granted that our practice is to read the Bible daily. But *how* do we read it? As those who are conscious that their souls require nourishment as well as their bodies? As those who are seeking in it for a hid treasure? As those who feel that it contains God's message to them; who look up to Him for the teaching of His Holy Spirit; and who lay open their hearts to 'receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save their souls'?

L. of C.

Our *Bible-reading* should be one of the most important duties of the day, and should never degenerate into a perfunctory duty, or into a mere task to be got through just to satisfy our conscience.

If the Bible be read thus, we shall get no good whatever from it. It will have a deadening influence on our minds, promoting doubts instead of removing them.

But if, on the other hand, we read it prayerfully and earnestly, we shall get nourishment and comfort thereby. In this, as in other things, 'the hand of the diligent maketh rich.' There is, I believe, a special blessing attending the earnest reading of God's Word; and many an one has risen up from the study of it with his mind drawn heavenward, and with a glow of Peace in his heart. '*Great peace*'

(says the Psalmist) 'have they that love Thy law.'

There are many other Ordinances and Means of Grace which are intended to help us on our Christian course; but if we neglect or misuse them they will be found to militate against our Peace.

The last that I shall mention is *Prayer*. The Hour of Prayer, whether Private, when we are alone with God, and tell out our daily wants to Him, and thank Him for our daily mercies; or Public, when we meet our brethren, and join them in the delightful act of worship—how blessed are they both, so long as there is a reality about them! This is especially the case when the act of Prayer includes the reception of the Holy Communion. Then we feel the nearness of our Lord at His own most

Holy Feast, the Sacrament of His Body and Blood. It does indeed strengthen and refresh us. Our souls are 'satisfied with marrow and fatness,' and our 'mouth praiseth thee with joyful lips.'

But if otherwise, then what a mockery! 'This people draweth nigh unto me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.'

St. Paul bids his Philippian brethren, 'in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving,' to make their 'requests unto God.' And to this charge he adds the most gracious assurance; 'And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.'

Who that knows anything of true Prayer has not felt the truth of this? When we have been holding real intercourse with God, when we have approached Him as our

loving Father, in spirit and in truth, and have poured out our hearts before Him, then do we experience a calmness and rest which does not soon leave us, and then we do indeed realise that He is the Giver of Peace.

ruth, and have
im, then do we
st which does
we do indeed
Peace.

CHAPTER IX.

CONCLUSION.

THERE are three points to which I desire to call your attention :—

1. I have a *caution* to offer you. You know that there is scarcely a single Coin that has not its Counterfeit : and this most precious Coin of Peace has its sad and false Imitation. Sound it well, and weigh it in the balance, or you may deceive yourself.

There are easy-going persons whose consciences are so blunted that they are quite content, and fancy that all is well. They take little or no account of sin, or no interest

in the great Sin-bearer. They walk unconcerned during the day, and lay their heads down at night without a pang to disturb them ; and yet all the while God's face is turned away from them.

And so they go on from week to week, and from year to year, till at length their sand has run out, and death stares them in the face. And perhaps even then the torpid soul is torpid still, and their death-cry is, as their life-cry was, ' Peace, peace, when there is no peace.'

With such there is no waking up, no rousing of the heart, no stripping off the false covering, till they stand face to face with God, and He declares the awful truth, ' I never knew you ; depart from Me. I required of My servants to be true and faithful ; but you loved Me not. I required you

to give Me your whole heart ; but it was pre-engaged, and absorbed in earthly trifles. I required a holy and devoted life ; but the ways and maxims of the world were your standard. I gave you a Saviour, and bade you to follow Him, to trust in Him, to believe in Him. I charged you to seek pardon and rest in His Cross ; but you turned away from it, for it had no charms for you.'

Now, beware of such Peace as this—of that False Peace which has deceived many, and is perhaps at this very moment deceiving you. Wake up, and say, ' I have deluded myself all along ; but, thank God, I have at length found myself out ; and without a moment's delay I will seek to have all my false Peace, all my flimsy covering, swept away ; and I will at once apply to that Saviour whom I

have so long despised, but who still loves me with an untiring love, and is yet crying : ' Why will ye die with pardon and Peace still within your reach ? '

2. By way of summing up the contents of what has been said, it may be well that I should draw the Portraiture of the Christian whom I should expect to find in the enjoyment of True Peace. He is one who has pleaded earnestly and perseveringly for its bestowal, and is looking to Christ for its continuance ; one who, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, has learnt to hate sin, and who honestly desires to expel every remnant of it from his heart ; one who, amidst all the pressing cares and trials of life, has found the secret of laying them all down before the Cross, and leaving them all there ; one too who has discovered that there is in God's

Day, in God's House, in God's Word, and in Prayer, a blessing and a treasure which fills the soul, and which the world can never, never give us. Such, I believe, is the character of the really peaceful Christian.

3. *Examine* yourself very closely on the Five Hindrances which I have mentioned in the foregoing pages. Answer each inquiry honestly and conscientiously. And if your reply must needs be 'No' to any one of them, be sure there is some impediment which dries up the flow of Peace within you. Try to correct what is amiss, and that without a moment's delay, saying to yourself: 'What have I to do with Peace so long as this impediment remains?'

And now before we part, for we have been holding intercourse together in these

pages, I desire to offer up the Apostle's Prayer for you : ' Now the Lord Himself give you Peace always, by all means : the Lord be with you.'

PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
LONDON

the Apostle's
and Himself give
ans: the Lord

WORKS BY THE RT. REV. ASHTON OXENDEN,

FORMERLY BISHOP OF MONTREAL.

- THE PATHWAY OF SAFETY;** or, Counsel to the Awakened. 363rd Thousand. Fcp. 8vo. large type, cloth, 2s. 6d. Cheap Edition. Small type, limp, 1s.
- THOUGHTS FOR LENT.** In Seven Chapters. Eighth Thousand. Fcp. 8vo. cloth, 1s. 6d.
- CONFIRMATION.** 717th Thousand. 18mo. cloth, 9d.; sewed, 3d.; or 2s. 6d. per dozen.
- COUNSELS TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED;** or, Now is the Time to Serve Christ. 15th Thousand. 18mo. cloth, 1s.
- BAPTISM SIMPLY EXPLAINED.** 19th Thousand. 18mo. cloth, 1s. Cheap Edition. Paper, 6d.
- THE LORD'S SUPPER SIMPLY EXPLAINED.** 84th Thousand. 18mo. cloth, 1s. Cheap Edition. Paper, 6d.
- THE EARNEST COMMUNICANT.** Common Edition. 555th Thousand. 32mo. 1s.
- SHORT COMMENTS ON ST. MATTHEW AND ST. MARK.** For Family Worship. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d.
- TOUCHSTONES;** or, Christian Graces and Characters Tested. Fcp. 8vo. 2s. 6d.
- SHORT LECTURES ON THE SUNDAY GOSPELS.** ADVENT to EASTER. 18th Thousand. EASTER to ADVENT. 17th Thousand. Fcp. 8vo. 2s. 6d. each.
- THE PARABLES OF OUR LORD.** 36th Thousand. Fcp. 8vo. large type, cloth, 3s.
- PORTRAITS FROM THE BIBLE.** Two Vols. OLD TESTAMENT. 28th Thousand. NEW TESTAMENT. 27th Thousand. Fcp. 8vo. cloth, 2s. 6d. each.
- OUR CHURCH AND HER SERVICES.** 35th Thousand. Fcp. 8vo. large type, cloth, 2s. 6d.
- THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.** 58th Thousand. Fcp. 8vo. large type, cloth, 2s. 6d. Cheap Edition. Small type, limp, 1s.

London: LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO.

Works by the same Author.

- FAMILY PRAYERS FOR FOUR WEEKS. First Series. 135th Thousand. Fcp. 8vo. 2s. 6d. Second Series. 32nd Thousand. Fcp. 8vo. 2s. 6d.
VERY LARGE-TYPE EDITION. Two Series in One Volume. Square crown 8vo. 6s.
- COTTAGE SERMONS; or, Plain Words to the Poor. 15th Thousand. Fcp. 8vo. 2s. 6d.
- COTTAGE READINGS. 8th Thousand. Fcp. 8vo. large type, cloth, 2s. 6d.
- THOUGHTS FOR HOLY WEEK. 16mo. cloth, 1s. 6d.
- THOUGHTS FOR ADVENT. In Nine Chapters. 8th Thousand. Fcp. 8vo. cloth, 1s. 6d.
- DECISION. 30th Thousand. 18mo. large type, cloth, 1s. 6d.
- PRAYERS FOR PRIVATE USE. 143rd Thousand. 32mo. cloth, 1s.
- FERVENT PRAYER. 46th Thousand. 18mo. large type, limp cloth, 1s.
- WORDS OF PEACE; or, The Blessings of Sickness. 84th Thousand. 16mo. cloth, 1s.
- THE HOME BEYOND; or, A Happy Old Age. 183rd Thousand. Fcp. 8vo. large type, cloth, 1s. 6d.
- GOLDEN MESSAGE TO THE POOR. 23rd Thousand. 18mo. large type, cloth, 1s. 6d.
- THE LABOURING MAN'S BOOK. 58th Thousand. 18mo. large type, cloth, 1s. 6d.
- THE STORY OF RUTH. 14th Thousand. 18mo. large type, limp cloth, 1s.
- A PLAIN HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. 9th Thousand. 18mo. large type, limp cloth, 1s.
- GREAT TRUTHS IN VERY PLAIN LANGUAGE. 39th Thousand. 18mo. large type, limp cloth, 1s.
- SHORT SERVICES FOR FAMILY WORSHIP, &c. 18mo. sewed, 3d.; limp cloth, 4d.
- PEACE, AND ITS HINDRANCES. Crown 8vo. paper cover.

London: LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO.

Author.

WEEKS. First Series.
Second Series. 32nd

Two Series in One

Gifts to the Poor. 15th

Fcp. 8vo. large type,

limp cloth, 1s. 6d.

Nine Chapters. 8th

Large type, cloth, 1s. 6d.

3rd Thousand. 32mo.

18mo. large type,

Signs of Sickness. 84th

Happy Old Age. 183rd

limp cloth, 1s. 6d.

3rd Thousand. 18mo.

3th Thousand. 18mo.

and. 18mo. large type,

CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

limp cloth, 1s.

LANGUAGE. 30th

cloth, 1s.

WORSHIP, &c. 18mo.

rown 8vo. paper cover.

EN, & CO.



