

June 8.

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country."—Heb. xi. 13, 14.

Do I declare this *plainly*? Am I willing to be known as one of those strangers and pilgrims who do not make themselves at home on the earth, but are known to be seeking another country? Or am I content to do as others do, and pass for one of the world's children, without being observed to differ from them in any way, so as to incur the reproach of Christ? Ah, there are too many, who, while not willing to give up the narrow way that leadeth unto life, are yet ashamed to be seen in it. Lord, grant that I may *fully* follow Thee! Far from me and mine be this half-heartedness which shrinks from declaring plainly, the hope, and the faith, and the love, which are the only things worth living for! May the example of these early saints stir me up!

How much more clear is the light vouchsafed to me than any that they had, when they saw afar off objects of faith which they yet grasped so firmly! May the same Spirit who led them be my guide to the "heavenly country," which they have long ages ago safely reached!

"In Thy footsteps now uphold me,  
That I stumble not nor stray;  
When the narrow way is told me,  
Never let me ling'ring stay,  
But come my weary soul to cheer;  
Oh, shine, Eternal Sunbeam, here!"

June 9.

"This man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood."—Heb. vii. 24.

Blessed be God that we have such an High Priest! Without Him how could we dare approach the throne? How could we dare lift up our guilty faces before Him? Blessed be God for the one, perfect, once-offered sacrifice, and blessed be God for the continued, powerful, all-prevailing intercession of our High Priest. Since St. Paul wrote these words concerning this priesthood, how many centuries have passed away, how many generations have vanished from the world, and how many poor sinners have been reconciled to God, by Him who, in His unchangeable priesthood, "*continueth ever!*" Of all the great multitude before the throne—a multitude which no man can number—not one has been brought there without the work and intercession of this High Priest; how great, then, is His glory in man's salvation! Without Him, none can be saved, for "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Of those who are in Him, none can be lost, for "they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." Keep me thus safe in Thy hand, O my Saviour!

"Where high the heavenly temple stands,  
The house of God not made with hands,  
A great High Priest our nature wears,  
The guardian of mankind appears.  
"He who on earth our surety stood,  
And pour'd on earth His precious blood,  
Pursues in heaven His mighty plan,  
The Saviour and the Friend of man."

Good Words for Every Day of the Year,  
Good Words, 1860. Editor, Norman MacLeod, DD.  
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June 10.

"Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge." —James iv. 11.

How is it that he who speaketh evil of his brother, speaketh evil of the law? Against what law does he offend? Not that of the ninth commandment perhaps, for he may not be guilty of bearing *false* witness against his neighbour; he offends against a wider law, even that which says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" "love worketh no ill to his neighbour," and love *speaketh* no ill of him. "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law." Its requirements are exceeding broad; they bid us speak no evil, *write* no evil, *think* no evil, one of another. They bind us together as brethren, yes, and *closer* than some brethren are bound. And to fulfil them as our heavenly Father would have us do, we must seek to have His Spirit, the spirit of love dwelling in our hearts, that we may not only exercise that passive charity which will speak no evil of our brethren, but the active charity which speaks good to them, and (if possible) good of them,—the charity which will lead us to be "kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

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June 11.

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."  
—Ps. ciii. 13-14.

God has given us the love of fathers and of mothers to teach us what His own love is. He gave to parents' hearts those deep feelings, that devoted love, that tender care; He then speaks to us in His Word, and tells us that these are types, and but feeble types of His own care, and tenderness, and love. "Can a woman forget her sucking child? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." But where is the faith that should answer this love with returns of that perfect confidence which happy children place in loving earthly parents? If we are indeed of the number of those that fear Him, the thought of His fatherly pity ought to be a continual source of comfort and strength to our hearts. He pities us because He knows us; and He knows us better than any on earth—better than we know ourselves. Many a friend would turn from us if they knew us as He does; but even because of His knowledge He pities, for "He remembers that we are dust." O heavenly Father, who art so loving because Thou art so great, and so pitying because Thou knowest our frame, "mercifully look upon our infirmities, and in all our dangers and necessities stretch forth Thy right hand to help and defend us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

"Then let our hearts no more despond,

Our hands be weak no more;

Still let us trust our Father's love,

His wisdom still adore."

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June 12.

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."—2 Tim. i. 7.

How rich are His gifts! How *complete* is the man who has the spirit of power, the spirit of love, and the spirit of a sound mind; while the spirit of fear is cast out, for "perfect love casteth out fear,"—and all this is recognised as being the work of God's Holy Spirit in that renewed heart. Let us consider what great things God has promised to do for us, that we may ask largely, for has He not said, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it?" Let us seek deliverance from the spirit of *fear*; it proceeds from a sense of guilt on the conscience, let us therefore take all our guilt and sins to the blood of Christ, and seek by faith in His perfect work and atonement, to be delivered from all our guilty fears. Then we are to ask and expect Him to give the spirit of *power*; strength to resist temptation, power to work our Lord's work on earth; and this is to be sweetly tempered with the gentler graces of the spirit of *love*, for this is the very Spirit of Christ, and we cannot be true Christians without it. The spirit of a *sound* mind is of no less importance to us; this does not mean the natural wisdom and sound judgment which many persons possess who have not been taught of God, but that spirit of a sound mind which is full of heavenly wisdom to see the things of eternity in their true light. Lord, "that we may obtain that which Thou dost promise, make us to love that which Thou dost command."

June 13.

"The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage."- Psalm xvi. 6.

Those who can say "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance," may well say, "The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places," whatever may be their outward condition or lot in life. The contrast is often very striking between the Christian's inward peace and outward struggle, for how often are "waters of a full cup wrung out to him," and yet by the grace of God he is enabled to say, "None of these things move me." It is of God's great mercy that we are often in circumstances to say that even in this life "the lines are fallen unto us in pleasant places;" but when it is otherwise with us, when sorrow, pain, or anxiety darken our days, let us consider what it is to have the Lord for our portion, and say if we would change our lot with that of the most prosperous worldling whom we know? He who is the Almighty God is our Father and our Friend, and can more than make up to us for the want of earthly joys. Let us repose in the thought of His love; what portion can be so rich as this? what earthly hopes so glorious as those which He sets before us? Oh, may He so reveal Himself to our souls, that we may be filled with joy and thankfulness for all that He has done for us, and desire to give ourselves up unreservedly to His service!

"My soul's Restorer, let me learn  
In Thy deep love to live and rest,  
Let me the precious thing discern  
Of which I am indeed possess.  
My treasure let me feel and see;  
And may my moments as they flee,  
Unfold my endless life in Thee."

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June 14.

"Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; he riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself."—John xiii. 3, 4.

This marvellous act is prefaced by marvellous words, most touching in their calm dignity; may the Lord enable us to *feel* them, and to look aright upon Jesus in "the form of a servant." It would be wonderful to see a king perform so lowly an office; but what is an earthly king to *Him*, the King of kings, into whose hands the Father hath given all things? And why did He stoop thus low? Not to teach the lesson of humility alone, but to write upon the inmost hearts of all who, like Peter, start back amazed at the sight, that other great lesson, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." Yes, Lord, this is indeed my case; I need Thy daily, Thine hourly washing—that washing which Thou only canst bestow, and without which I can have no part with Thee. Leave me not, in my guilty ignorance, to forget my continual need of Thy cleansing blood. The work is finished, it is perfect, but unless Thou apply it to me by Thy Spirit I can never be found among those who have "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

"There is a fountain fill'd with blood,  
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;  
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,  
Lose all their guilty stains."