

THE LIVING PULPIT,

OR

EIGHTEEN SERMONS

BY EMINENT LIVING DIVINES

OF

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

WITH

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE EDITOR,

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DISTRUST OF THE WORD.

BY

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The children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle.—PSALM LXVIII. 9.

THIS ill conduct of the Ephraimites, in turning their backs upon the enemy, is referred by expositors to various events. It is by no means unnatural to consider the Psalmist as alluding to the surrender of the ark to the Philistines; for Shiloh, then the seat of the tabernacle, was within the tribe of Ephraim. 1 Sam. iv. 4. Whenever and wherever it occurred, it presented the mortifying spectacle of a host in retreat, and this when amply furnished with weapons of war. Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle. The passage stands in the midst of rehearsals of victories and deliverances, and of rebukes for unbelief and doubt. It was "written for our learning," and we cannot meditate on it, without a sad reflection that we, as a part of God's Israel, are engaged in a warfare, and summoned to "fight the good fight of faith;" that *we* are armed with the grand weapon of faith—the WORD OF GOD; that we too have sometimes turned to flight, or proved cowards in Christ's cause; and that the

shame of our sin is the greater, inasmuch as the weapon which we have distrusted is of divine power. Believing Israel to be a type of the church, and the words of the text to be for all ages of Christianity, I do not consider it in the least opposed to the analogy of New Testament precedent, to give this general principle of the Hebrew psalm a particular application. Dismissing the figure, therefore, let us seriously meditate on what it represents.

It is true of multitudes who are engaged in the Christian warfare, that they are distrustful of their own weapons. For a soldier, there could hardly be a more unfortunate prepossession. His blows must be half-delivered, and his disposition to parley or to flee, exceedingly subversive of bold fighting. The grand weapon of the Christian soldier is thus expressed, in the most general terms, and in a metaphor—"the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." This is the great instrument of assault against the world and against himself; for it is a peculiarity of our warfare, that some of our most obstinate battles take place within the walls. The truth of God, however largely understood, is the name of our whole offensive armour. This truth in general, and certain prominent truths in particular, are precisely what the Captain of Salvation has put into our hands, to be used against the adversary. It is a firm confidence in the temper, strength, and edge of these weapons, which makes the brave combatant. And it is the distrust of our unbelieving minds in these qualities of the Word of God, which I would endeavour to stigmatise and remove. The fault here pointed out is not the fault of one and another merely, but

in some degree of us all; of ministers as well as people; of societies and churches, as well as of humble individuals.

I shall endeavour to show how this distrust of divine truth is exhibited; how it operates against the success of Christian effort, and how it may be removed.

I. DISTRUST OF DIVINE TRUTH, AS THE MAIN OFFENSIVE WEAPON OF THE CHRISTIAN WAR, IS EVINCED IN A VARIETY OF WAYS.

1. *By the disposition common to us all, to resort to other instruments than those which God has appointed.* Not error merely, in opposition to truth; but sundry agencies, of a purely secular kind, are employed by Christians to accomplish those very ends for which the Scriptures are put into their hands. If the world is to be reformed, we fly to arrangements and causes which are external, economical, patriotic, literary, or simply moral, rather than to that which is spiritual. Things good in themselves, and pre-eminently good when subordinated to the gospel, become usurpations, malign and dangerous, when they supplant God's ordinance. The world is to be reformed, and, under God, we are to reform it; but in God's way, and by his methods. The corrupt mass of mankind, tending, by virtue of internal maladies, to a catastrophe of disorder, vice and woe, is to be regulated, purified and blessed by a certain prescribed agency, set forth in all its details in this book. In the midst of the great self-destroying mass is placed a small but mighty engine, to accomplish an end for which philanthropists and politicians are sighing and labouring in vain. This energy within,

which is to change the face of human society, and insure universal brotherhood, is the CHURCH: the Church, my brethren; not of Rome, of England, or of Geneva, but the Church of the first-born of God; namely, the family of true believers, sanctified by the truth called out of all nations, washed in the blood of the Lamb, and enclosing an infant generation baptized into the Lord's name. The means by which this community is to effect so gigantic a result is one and simple; it is the truth revealed in the Scripture. To substitute for this any other agency, for the same ends, and not in subordination to this divine principle, is to change the whole method of warfare, and to forsake our own professions and standards. If the Church could be proved insufficient for what it proposes, this would afford a just reason for trying other means; but it would, at the same time, prove the claims of Christianity to be groundless. If other ends, not contemplated by the gospel methods, are proposed, they may indeed be sought by other means; but such ends are, by the very supposition, temporal, and therefore inferior. The great moral changes which would make our world a happy world, are exactly what the Church is ordained to effect, by means of the truth; and for all these ends the Church is sufficient. When wisdom has fully considered the line between these two classes of results, and allotted to Christianity those which are her part, it is a sort of disrespect to the system we profess, to use for the same purpose other machinery than that which God has prescribed; and to do so is to manifest distrust of God's way.

2. The same distrust is evinced *by a proneness in*

many of us to modify or conceal the statements of revealed truth. All truths are not alike fundamental, nor applicable alike to all cases and at all times; but every truth of this record has its place and season of application, and is then and there to be applied without reserve or tampering—for this plain reason, that it is the God of truth who utters it. But how often does it happen, that in addresses to the body of believers, in exhortations to the unawakened, in counsel to the inquiring, or appeals to our own hearts, we falter in delivering the pure, unadulterated word, and feel half afraid that it may do more harm than good! How often does worldly fear seal up the lips which were ready to pronounce the doctrine of God's sovereign election; or worldly policy drive back the free current of gracious invitation! More watchful against momentary offence, and occasional abuse, than against the permanent and destructive influence of ignorance and all error, we seal up the very fountains which God has caused to flow from the smitten rock. Hence we shudder when the preacher declares the statements of Jehovah himself, respecting his own awful decrees, or the irrevocable damnation of the dying hypocrite; and, on the other hand, stand ready, when he publishes the grace of Calvary, to hang chains and weights on the freedom of an offer which flies far and high above all legal preparations and conditions. Thus have a thousand errors and heresies arisen. Men have thought themselves more prudent than the All-wise. The Law has been lowered lest sinners should call it hard; the way has been hedged up, lest the blind, and the halt, and the lame, should find it too easy;

the Church has been barricaded with walls of ceremony, and garrisoned with ranks of officials, lest some of its riches should be pilfered by dissent; and the blessed Gospel, free as the air of Paradise, has been laden with conditions and restrictions, lest faith should be too simple. In every one of these, and in a thousand like ways, men show their distrust of divine revelation.

3. *Another proof of distrust in regard to the truth of God, is the small measure and lukewarm temper in which we actually use it.* If it is what we profess to believe, it is an instrument suited to an infinite diversity of objects, all included in the one result of making men better and happier. With this persuasion deeply fixed in our minds, we should be perpetually employing it for these ends; we should bring it forth, and apply it to the daily emergencies of labour, study, trade, and domestic life; we should use it for a standard, as we use the familiar standards of our common business, when we measure, weigh, or calculate. We should bring to this test the morality and expediency of many an act, and the purity of many a motive. That we do not, is only a proof how little we are Christians. It shows at how low a rate we estimate the cogency of scriptural principle; that there are so many things in commerce, in study, in politics, in education, and in social reform, (all involving moral relations,) which we never bring into the light of God's word. We carry on our affairs, and dispose of our property, and plan our amusements, and execute great changes in life, and bring up our children, and make our wills, without once turning to God's book to find how these

several steps, which really make up the aggregate of our lives, are regarded in heaven.

He who trusts in God's word as an infallible directory, will never find a day in which he can live without its guidance. He cannot rise from sleep, without a query how the day's plan may be laid so as to find him, like Enoch, walking with God; or take his early meal, without a purpose that it be sanctified by the word of God and prayer. He cannot receive his dues, without considering how much he oweth unto his Lord, and how much he is in danger from the mammon of unrighteousness. He cannot meet a friend, without casting about for a scripture maxim which may sanctify their union; or an enemy, without guarding his temper by the precept of forgiveness. Nor can he close his doors, and "go up to the habitation of his bed," until he has looked back over the journey of the day, and applied to it the lesson of God's statutes. And the fact that all this is unknown in the days of any professing Christians, is too conclusive an argument of their habitual distrust of heavenly truth as the instrument of their sanctification.

4. One evidence more will suffice to show our distrust of divine truth. It is *our neglect of this volume*. The soldier who has a favourite weapon is apt to be very much engaged in exercising it, and preparing to wield it. We have read of the knights in the days of chivalry, and of their trusty swords, many of which had inscriptions of honour and names of endearment. Many were the hours spent in sharpening and polishing these blades; many more in brandishing them by way of preparation, so as to

learn their qualities, and how to make them effectual. All this proved how truly they valued their arms, and it tended towards valorous conflict and easy victory. But we have a sword which we treat after a different fashion. It lies on our pulpits, perhaps on our tables. We bring it forth on special occasions, and never mention it but with devotion. We enshrine it, and praise it—would fight for it, but not with it. It lies, like the sword of Goliath the Philistine, at the dwelling of the priest Abimelech, “wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod.” 1 Sam. xxi. 9. Whereas we should say of it, as did David: “*There is none like that: give it me.*” The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, requires to be taken up in the way of daily exercise. It will be so handled by those who rely on it. The Scriptures, as the great magazine of truth, available for all the demands of life, will be resorted to in serious meditation by every man who is convinced that his own life and salvation, and the life and salvation of millions, depend on it; and he who is little engaged in close examination of the Bible, gives the best evidence possible that he has little practical belief in its amazing power. It is vain, and all but ludicrous, for any one to avow his supreme reverence for the Scriptures as the means of regenerating society and opening heaven, when he spends hours over the daily journal, or the book of gaiety, for minutes bestowed on prophets and apostles, and the words of Jesus, the Son of God. Let us change our practice or abate our professions; let us cease to applaud Moses, Isaiah and Paul, unless we mean to read them; for while we neglect our chief weapon, we plainly tell

the world that we have no confidence in its virtues. If these marks are of any value, they show, my brethren, that in a greater or a less degree we are all guilty of ascribing less than is just to the chosen instrument of the Holy Ghost, the truth of revelation; and if we are conscious of the fault, we are in a good condition to deepen our sense of its folly, by contemplating, in the second place,

II. THE OPERATION OF THIS DISTRUST, IN REGARD TO CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY. The activity here meant is that which concerns our enemies, and the enemies of the Church, who are more numerous, and more malignant, and more formidable, than all human foes; and though fellow mortals may be sometimes "God's sword," and are often the devil's hirelings, you will behold, if your eyes are opened, an array yet more fearful, and a battle yet more bloody; for we wrestle not as with flesh and blood, but against princes, against powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickedness in high places. The odds would be fearful were not He that is for us greater than they that are against us. But divine aid in this contest, like all divine aid, is ordered and prescribed. God has provided armour, both on the right hand and on the left; that is to say, both sword and shield—both offensive and defensive. Every piece is named; the inventory is here—helmet, breastplate, girdle, buckler, and shoes; but all in vain, unless the warrior endue himself with the harness, and utterly ineffectual without the weapon of attack—the sword of the Spirit. This we have found reason to believe has been, with some, rusting in the scabbard; its heavenly temper

is disallowed; and of this distrust the effect is manifold disability, weakness, fear and defeat. Let us more closely examine these effects.

1. Distrust of the Word of God, as an instrument, *indisposes the soul for spiritual warfare*. He who doubts his bow will avoid the conflict. Let me not be misunderstood, as if what I meant was religious controversy, in its common acceptation. Controversy there is indeed; but not the war of words, or simple battling for opinions. The war which rages under our banners is a war for life or death; it began when sin entered; it will end when sin is eternally expelled. In the individual soul, it begins when grace enters; it ends when glory is made sure. It is the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. The new nature, like God its author, is essentially the antagonist of sin, in its principle and its acts. From the soul, that is, from the centre outwards, it urges an influence of opposition which is penetrating, expulsive, and destroying. It struggles to bring all things to its own likeness, and therefore to annul all that is unlike it; this is the law of the kingdom of heaven, which is leaven, and salt, and light. While this process goes on in the individual soul, it goes on also in communities. That which the seed of grace does in one, the piety of God's people does in many in the world at large; and both in one case and in the other, it is truth which is the instrument. To make it accomplish this, its office, there is need of constant, restless activity. Let this cease in the soul, and sin gains ground; let it cease in the Church, and Christianity makes no progress—which will account for a number of painful phe-

nomena, such as backsliding, the loss of comfort, the decline of revivals, the decay of missionary spirit, the arrest of reformation work, in a word, the "turning back in the day of battle." But you perceive at once, that a cause could scarcely be named more certain to produce this result, than distrust of the truth. Undervalue the power of this means, and you will be indisposed to war; you will love the shades of carnal peace; you will have a Christianity which is tamed down to servile acquiescence in all that sin proposes, and all that the world allows. Distrust of the armour of truth must needs indispose for the spiritual warfare.

2. Distrust of the Word of God, as an instrument, *makes the soul weak when forced into the struggle.* He who doubts his bow will fight feebly. This applies to those who actually contend against sin in some degree; but they contend at a disadvantage.

It was not the least of the causes of primitive success, that the apostles and martyrs confided in the Gospel as an instrument of irresistible force. They were not ashamed of it. It had transformed them; it could transform others. It was the power of God unto salvation, whether wielded against Jewish prejudice or Greek philosophy. In their hands it destroyed the wisdom of the wise, and brought to nothing the understanding of the prudent. They spoke in words which the Holy Ghost teacheth. This was their confidence; this made them strong in the battle—good soldiers of Jesus Christ. They dealt no doubtful blows; they ran not as uncertainly; they fought not as one that beateth the air. Even Paul, who, in presence among the Corinthians,

could say that he was "base" among them, could also say of his Christian valour, "We do not war after the flesh, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God." Nay, such was his estimate of this weapon, that he cries, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ." And, my brethren, if you will turn over all the books of church history, and all your recollections of good men, you will not find an individual, ancient or modern, in the pulpit or out of it, remarkable for great success in promoting religion, who had not, at the same time, a high confidence in the truth of the Gospel to produce this very result.

How different the spectacle in our day! There are enemies enough to fight, but we sit still; or when we contend, how feebly is it! Vice triumphs around us—error stalks abroad; but our blows are scarcely felt, because we ourselves think them impotent. The remedy would be for us to acquire such a holy admiration for the Bible, as the instrument of invasion and victory, as should lead the feeblest woman, and the youngest Sabbath school teacher, to shout, "*The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!*" Then should our success be such, that the church would renew the exclamation of Habakkuk, "Thy bow was made quite naked, according to the oaths of the tribes—*even thy word!*" Hab. iii. 9. How can we shame and intimidate our foe when we doubt our very arms?

3. Distrust of the Word of God, as an instrument, tends to make the soul retreat before its enemies. He who distrusts his bow will flee.

Grant that you do not avoid conflict; grant that you ply your adversary, the devil, with some showers of arrows; yet any diffidence, in regard to the instrument you employ, will suggest cessation and flight. To begin a battle is not to conquer. In the evil day you are *to stand*, to war courageously, "and, having done all, *to stand*." Cowardice is certain, if you feel no strength; to doubt your armour is to be unarmed. David went out between two lines of fierce array, holding up his ruddy countenance with elation, though he carried only a shepherd's staff, a sling, and five smooth stones out of the brook; but he was strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I am come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, whom thou hast defied."

Our grand business is to carry on a warfare which our predecessors began. The world is to be subdued, and every Christian is in the ranks. You know your weapon of attack; you ought to know its power. But if, when assaulted, you have misgivings about this, and if these misgivings continue, you will faint, you will fly. Hence, when error has come into the church, and ministers and people have used the truth, as men use a bow which they expect to break, or a piece of ordnance which they fear will burst, the result has been according to that threatening against Israel: "The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies; thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them." Deut. xxviii. 25. In every engagement, in the heart or in the world, doubt as to the

efficacy of the means will produce fearfulness and retreat.

4. Distrust, in regard to God's truth, *will be likely to cause defeat*. He who doubts his bow will generally be conquered. I admit that, in the great concern, namely, personal salvation, every regenerate man is safe; he cannot be defeated; his redemption is sure; but it is because he is in Christ's hands; because no one can pluck him thence; because the believer *abides* in him, John xv. 6, and Christ's words abide in the believer. It is by the *truth* that even saints persevere; but even saints may be repulsed in those lesser engagements which precede their final conquest. Israel may be chased by the Amorites, and destroyed by them in Seir, Deut. i. 44, though they are eventually to cross Jordan; they may be smitten before Ai, so that Joshua may say, "O Lord, what shall I say when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies?" Josh. vii. 8, though they are eventually to possess the land. Private Christians may lose the field, and, for a time, be subject to the world; congregations may lose the savour of divine things, and cease to influence the mass around them; public enterprises may fail, by reason of declining faith, in such as should support them; branches of the visible church may fall back before their adversaries, dwindle, and even disappear. All these are temporary conquests by the enemy. Thus Shiloh, once the seat of the ark, became a proverb of desertion. Jer. vii. 12, 14; 1 Sam. iv. 11; Psa. lxxviii. 60. Wittenberg, the cradle of the Reformation, is profaned by rationalism; Geneva, where Calvin taught, is held by bap-

tised infidels; and Cambridge, where the Puritan fathers rejoiced in a divine Saviour, is the citadel of Socinianism. Distrust of the truth, failure to employ it, substitution of something in its place—these are the causes of the dire reverse. And it may be that Protestant America, unless she take a manlier hold on the Scriptures, may become the western ally of the Beast, and shine with the splendid jewels, and crosses, and mitres of subjugation. In a word, if we would have the blessings of religion we must prize its means; and if we would be victorious against sin, Satan, worldly fashion, error, infidelity, Popery, idolatry, and vice, we must feel that the Bible is an instrument, which, in God's hand, shall bring them all to destruction. It is the lamentable want of this persuasion which makes us, though armed, to turn back in the day of battle; and it is *the remedy for this disease of the soul*, to which I call your attention; it is the third and last head of my discourse.

III. Before stating THE MEANS OF RECOVERY, let us look once again at the evil, and its opposite good. The evil is distrust of God's word; the opposite good is a high estimate of divine truth as the weapon of our warfare. The question is, How shall this just valuation of the truth be increased in us? And the answer to this may be comprised in a few simple, but I trust important particulars.

1. It will be our duty to consider *what this weapon has already achieved*. This was the method taken by the Psalmist in the context. He recounts the victories of Israel. It had been their sin that "they forgat God's works, and his wonders that he

showed them." v. 11. He rehearses these works and wonders—"They believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation." v. 22. The Psalmist goes over the pilgrimage in the desert—"They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy." v. 42. The sacred poet accumulates the trophies of God's host; in like manner, my brethren, let us look back at the conquests of truth. Whatever Christianity has done, has been done by the Word. This is the weapon which, in God's hand, routed the hosts of heathenism, razed the ancient temples, struck the oracles dumb, quenched the fire of altars, staunched the flow of human blood, broke the chains of slavery, raised the feeble sex to membership with Christ, and fortified ten thousand citadels with virtuous bulwarks; and when Christianity had grown corrupt, and superstition and idolatry threatened once more to come in like a flood, under a Christian name, the Lord lifted up a standard against them. It was this divine truth which effected the Reformation; it was this book which, found in the convent at Erfurt, became in the hands of Luther a sword to pierce the vitals of the Beast; it is this instrument which forced a way for our fathers into this western continent, and which their sons are carrying to the uttermost parts of the earth; it is a consideration which may be administered as a cordial to the fainting Ephraimite.

2. Nor is it in the past only that we find such encouragement. Consider, I pray you, *what this weapon is accomplishing this day*. From a thousand high places in Zion, in this Sabbath hour, the bow

is drawn at a venture, and the arrows of Messiah are sharp in the hearts of the king's enemies, whereby the people fall under him. God's people are still like Joseph—"the archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him; but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands are still made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob." Gen. xlix. 24. The Word, read and heard, is awakening sinners, comforting sufferers, supporting the weak, confirming the strong, and sanctifying the imperfect. While I speak, it is urging on to victory part of the host, who are this moment struggling on the verge of the river; and from whose lips I hear the voice of the last battle-cry—"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Beloved, let us not distrust our weapons, until they shall cease to do such things as these.

3. But this is not all; the half has not been told you; for consider *what this instrument is yet to achieve*. It is the triumphal song of all the prophecies. They so illuminate the future, as that it becomes to the past and present what the noonday is to the morning-watch. Let me reserve for other Sabbaths the fuller recital of what holy seers have told us of that latter glory; enough for us to-day, that all these glories are the effects of truth. In other words, the triumph of Christianity is the triumph of faith. Our Captain of Salvation is leading us on to a victory, of which the philosophers of this world have not dreamt. He addresses us, in view of the coming onset, as he addressed Joshua thirty-two centuries ago; he so addresses us, as if he solemnly put our hands upon the

sword and on the bow—" *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success; have not I commanded thee? Be strong, and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest.*" Josh. i. 8, 9.

We learn, then, to confide in our weapons, by considering what they have done, what they are doing, and what they are yet to do.

4. Is it not then a plain duty, for the very end proposed, *to make ourselves familiar with this blessed volume*, in a degree which we have never yet known? Surely the Mohammedan will rise in judgment against us; for he cleaves to his Koran, he studies it, he passes days over it, he commits it to his memory. If our Christianity is destined, as I hope it is, greatly to revive in this age; if the Lord's battle is to be fought with unexampled vigour, it will not be until we give new attention to the scriptures of truth. Then, when this Bible takes its due place in colleges, in schools, in social circles, in families, in counting rooms, in ships upon the sea; when it is craved and called for by thousands, as in the days of the reformers, we shall behold a reformation of which that from Popery was but the type. Then shall heathen sages, if such remain, exclaim of the Church, as did Balaam concerning Israel, "The Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them!" Num. xxiii. 21. Then shall heathenism, and rationalism, and communism, and Romanism, and all the battalions of errorism, leave the field. "One shall chase a thousand,

and two put ten thousand to flight!" Deut. xxxii. 30. What, O, brethren, is the instrument in these certain changes? It is truth, before which all that is corrupt shall burn, and all that is stubborn shall be broken. "Is not my *word* like as a fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Jer. xxiii. 29.

5. Once more; as a remedy for distrust, *place yourselves in circumstances in which you will have to observe the energy of this weapon.* This truth, whether you are aware of it or not, is even now working wonders. It is healing hard hearts; it is transforming lions to lambs; it is pulling down strong holds. To behold all this, be persuaded, Christian professors, to enter the ranks yourselves. Draw forth the bow; put the arrow upon your string; engage in actual service; leave the world for a little to whirl without you, and venture out of winter quarters to do something for God. Even if your own army be asleep, steal forth and survey the enemy's camp, as did Gideon and his servant Phurah, and perhaps you will have cause to say with him, "Arise, for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian!" Judg. vii. 15. Attain the mastery of your bow by practice, and you shall no longer turn your backs in the day of battle.

6. There is one further suggestion, and the series will have an end. Of all means of gaining confidence in the truth, none can be compared to this: *to become personally experienced in its power.* It can wound, and it can heal. Open your bosom to its efficacy. Ye who have meditated in the word, day and night, have no distrust of its power. It has

made you what you are; it is yet to make you wiser, purer, stronger, and happier. Pray, without ceasing, that God would fulfil in you "all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power." 2 Thess. i. 11. All the conquests of religion are so many new steps of Christian experience; new exercises or new subjects; and all experience is by faith. Say continually, "*Lord increase our faith!*" This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 1 John v. 4. Thus exercised, you will rise above all doubt as to the armour and the bow; believing, you will wonder at your foregoing timidity; and when all the church shall thus deeply feel the energy of the Word, the closing words of this passage shall come true: "Then Jehovah awaked as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine. And he smote his enemies in their retreat; he put them to a perpetual reproach."