Why is Faith so Rare?

BEY MR. SPURGEON UPON AN ABSORBING TOPIC.

"And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?"—Mark 4: 40.

Last Lord's-day morning our music was pitched upon a high key. We sought after great faith in the Master's name. It struck me that I might, perhaps, have discouraged some of the feebler sort, and that, therefore, it would be meet this morning to follow up that sermon by endeavoring to encourage those of weak faith to exercise it until it becomes stronger, and also to invite those who as yet have no faith to venture in the direction of childlike trust. With this brief introduction, let us come at once to our subject.

I should not wonder if the disciples considered that they had much faith in Jesus, their Master and Lord. I do not question that they, each one of them, esteemed himself a firm believer in Jesus. How could he tolerate a doubt? But, my brethren, we have none of us any idea how scanty our faith really is. When trial comes, the heap from the threshing floor becomes very small beneath the influence of the winnowing fan. After a day of calm service with Jesus a storm came on, and that storm tested their faith, and left so little of it, that Jesus said to them, "Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?" Remember, that we have no more faith at any time than we have in the hour of trial. All that which will not bear to be tested is mere carnal confidence. Fair-weather faith is no faith; only that is real faith in Jesus Christ which can trust him when it cannot trace him, and believe him when it cannot see him.

This storm was a special trial to his disciples, because it was so exceedingly severe, and because it came upon them when they were in the path of duty. Their Master had bidden them cross the sea; they were not upon a holiday trip. They had not even followed the suggestion of a brother who had said, "I go a-fishing; but they were steering under their great Captain's orders. They were doing right, and suffering trouble in consequence. This has often perplexed good men. I have heard a believer say, "I prospered more before I was a Christian, than I have done since. Things went smoothly with me before I knew the Lord. How can these things be? The very fact of my endeavouring to do what is right, and laboring to maintain my integrity, has become the cause of my severest trial." This is no new thing upon the earth. The living child of God will have to swim against the stream. Not without fighting will he win his crown.

Moreover, it was an item which helped to try their faith, that the storm assailed them when Jesus was in the ship. Had the Lord been absent they could have understood it; but he was in the vessel with them! How could the sea be so boisterous with Christ in the vessel? If I am out of communion with Christ, I can understand why I am chastened; but if I am walking in conscious nearness and fellowship with him, and I am even then tried and perplexed, how can I account for it? Herein is the test of faith. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." This we forget, and fancy that trials must mean anger, when, indeed, they may be tokens and test of love.

See, my brethren, how these disciples came out of the tempest! They went into the trial well enough, but they were in an evil plight before long. Such are we, as a rule, after severe trial. We make a fair show in the flesh till we are tried, and then our feathers cling around us, and we droop and hide away, till our Master has to say to us, "Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?"

I. We will first use the questions as the exclamation of pity. The dear Master, waking up from his sleep, calm as if it were a bright summer's morning, though it was the dead of night and the midst of a storm, looks upon them with wonder, finding them so strangely different from himself; and he asks in all the calmness of his own brave spirit, "Why are ye so fearful?" He pitied them, and he pitied them, I think, for several reasons. First, that their fears had made them so unlike himself. They were his servants, and they should have been as their Master; they were learning of him, and they should have put in practice the lessons of his example. He was delightfully quiet, and the contagion of his peace ought to have affected them. Our blessed Master must often look upon us, dear friends, with much pity, and grieve over us, that after being with us so long—for some of us are getting gray in his service—we still fall so far short of his glory. We are predestinated to be conformed to his image, but the process is a slow one. After copying his handwriting our own writing is still greatly marred with crooks and curves. Each page of the copy-book of life is marred with errors and blots; therefore the great Author pities the novice scholar.

Jesus pitied them again because their fears made them so unhappy. They go! they were made wretched by their fears. I know some Christian people who suffer greatly from the same cause. I know a man who lives where I live, and stands in this pulpit where I stand, who has to confess his own faults this day, for he might enjoy unbroken peace were it not that in the care and labor of this great church, and all its various agencies, he looks to the difficulties and necessities of the case, and to his own weakness, and then fears rushes in. Believe me, we must not forever be thus childishly timorous. Our sorrows are mostly manufactured at home, beaten out upon the anvil of unbelief with the hammer of our foreboding. The Lord pardons us! Jesus pities us that we should lacerate ourselves by our needless fears, and miss the joy of faith.

Again, the Master felt pity for them because their fears made them so unkind. Does unbelief make the timid unkind? I am sure it does. The disciples were ungenerous to their sleeping Master. If they must needs wake him, might they not have addressed him in fitter words? To say, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" was fretful and wicked. It was enough to wound their Lord's tender heart to be thus spoken to. Our unbelief has a tendency to make us unkind also. We are not tender of others when we are disturbed about ourselves.

Here let me digress to teach a lesson of pitying love. It is well to recognize that sour speeches often proceed from a sad heart. It is wise to view ungenerous language as one of the symptoms of the disease, and rather pity the sufferer than become irritated with the offensive speech. It is a pity to take much notice of what some sufferers says, for they will be sorry for it soon. If we knew the real reason for many a harsh word, our sympathy would prevent even momentary anger. Our Lord did overlook the petulance of the apostles; for he did not say, "Why are ye so unkind?" but he inquired, "Why are ye so fearful?" In every case let us cure unkindness with double love.

II. But now, secondly, these words were the censure of love. They were intended to convey a measure of gentle rebuke to their mistrustful hearts. Their unbelief was grievous to the Lord Jesus. They ought to have believed him, and it was an injury to his perfect love that they should so readily mistrust him, or even mistrust him at all. How could they think that he would let them sink? He was in the vessel with them; did they suppose that, after all he was a mere pretender to Deity, and that the ship would go down with him on board? Beloved, let us smite upon our breasts to think that we should ever have caused a pang of heart to that dear Lord who yielded up his life for our salvation. He must not be doubted any more; it is wanton cruelty. Our Lord questioned his apostles thus, not only because their unbelief grieved him, but because it was most unreasonable. The most unreasonable thing in the world is to doubt God. Faith is pure reason. That may seem a strange paradox, but it is literally true; nothing is so reasonable as to believe the Word of God, which cannot error lie. Moreover, their unbelief was contrary to their common-sense. Some people make a great deal of common sense; and well they may, for it is the most uncommon of all the senses. Was it reasonable for these men to think that he, who could foresee the future, would take them on board a ship when he foreknew that a storm would wreck them? Would so kind a leader have taken them to sea to drown them? Our unbelief, my brethren, seldom deserves to be reasoned with. Our fears are often intensely silly, and when we get over them, and ourselves look back upon them, we are full of shame that we should have been so foolish. Our Lord kindly censured their unbelief because it was unreasonable.

Jesus censured his friends because he foresaw that such unbelief as theirs would unfit them for their future lives. That ship was the symbol of the Church of Christ, and the crew of the ship were the apostles of Christ. The storm represented in parable the persecutions which the church would have to endure; and lo! they, if they were cast down as cowards in a storm on the paltry lake of Galilee, would be proving themselves altogether unfit for those more tremendous spiritual storms which in after years tossed the church, and mingled earth and hell in dire confusion. Brethren, our present trials may be a training ground for more serious conflicts. We do not know what we have yet to endure; the adversities of to-day are a preparatory school for the higher learning. If we do not play the man now, what shall we do by and by? Oh, for calm hope, and a childish repose on the love which cannot fail! I have hurried over ground where I might profitably have tarried, because I want to have an earnest word with you upon the third point.

III. We may now regard these words as an inquiry of wisdom. It is always good to probe a sorrow to the bottom, if there is any hope of finding out its cause, and putting it away. If you are in fear you may rise above it by removing its cause. If there be clearly no reason for fear, you will cease to fear; and if there be a cause of fearfulness, you can deal with it. My utterances will be as short as telegrams; please enlarge on them at your leisure. "How is it that ye have no faith?" This is the inquiry.

Is it want of knowledge? If the disciples had known Jesus better they would have had no fear, but would have exhibited firm faith. Is it not so with any of you? Are you badly taught in the Gospel? If it be so, your quickest way to faith will be to read your Bible more, to study it with greater attention, and to hear the Gospel of cner. Spend three, four, five times the amount of time you now do in devotion, and so draw nearer to your Lord, entreating the Holy Spirit to lead you into all truth. Next, is it want of thought? Did these good people know and yet forget? Do we fail to consider? Were they superficial in their thinking? Is this the reason why you, also, are so fearful and have so little faith? If so, mend your ways, my brethren. Mend them at once. Have more thought, more prayer—much more prayer, more praise—much more praise, more meditation, more calm investigation of your own heart, and more acquaintance with the things of God.

I shall conclude by carrying this inquiry into another region for another purpose. In this congregation here are a considerable number of friends who are not yet believers in Jesus Christ, and I want to know from them this morning why they have no faith. I entreat them to help me in the inquiry. Why is it that they are still so fearful, still so unbelieving? My dear friend, you will want faith soon, for you will have to die. Whether you live in Christ or no, you will have to die; and dying is hard work to those who have no Saviour. Perhaps before Another Sabbath day you may be in the swellings of Jordon, and what will you do if you have no faith in Christ? Do you say that you desire to have faith? I am glad to hear it; but I should like to press this matter home, and to ascertain whether this desire is earnest, thorough, and hearty.

If you are not believing in Christ, I should like to know why not. Is it that you are believing in yourself? If so, give up such folly. You cannot trust yourself and trust Christ, too; away with all notion of such a conjunction. Hang up self-confidence on a gallows high as that whereon Haman was suspended, for it is an abominable thing.

Perhaps it is your great sin that leads you to dispair of pardon. There is no occasion for such unbelief, for God is abundant in mercy, and the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. Instead of doubting, I pray you to glorify God by believing in the greatness of his salvation.

It is of his redeeming love that I have now to tell you, and to entreat any here who are not yet reconciled to God, to come this night in faith to Jesus, that he may take their sins away. Oh, that you, my dear hearers, would believe the Lord Jesus to be a real Saviour of real sinners, and come to him with all your sins about you! God bless you, for Christ's sake! Amen.

Horsford's Acid Phosphate

FOR EXHAUSTION.

Dr. A. N. Krout, Van Wert, O., says: "I found it decidedly beneficial in nervous exhaustion."

Earnest Endeavor.

Somewhere about seventy years ago a fine-looking, portly man stood on the Battery, overlooking the water, shading his eyes with his hand, and gazing seaward.

Well-to-do, oh, yes; from the crown of his glossy hat to the toes of his well-polished boot. Everything betokened an abundance of this world's goods, and his face corresponded with the entire appearance of the man. Bright hazel eyes set off a good countenance; one would know by a glance one would have his sympathy, and that one could trust him.

A small boy, evidently not of the great city, wandering through the Battery, stole up to the side of the portly gentleman, as softly as one of the falling leaves which floated down from the trees above him.

Side by side they stood, the wee country lad with dusty shoes, and the polished man of the world.

Feeling rather than seeing the mite beside him, Mr. Barbour looked down on the boy, encountering the gaze of a pair of earnest blue eyes. Mr. Barbour, perceiving that the boy was not one of the city waifs, and noting an inquiring look in his face, said to him:

"My boy, what can I do for you to-day?"

"Oh, sir, don't you want a boy in your store?"

"Why do you ask? You are too small."

"O, please, sir, I want a place, and I hoped you wanted a boy."

Mr. Barbour's eyes twinkled and he replied:

"I should think you ought to be in school, and not in a store."

"But, sir, I must work."

"Don't you like to go to school?"

"Yes, sir, but—" and the boy's lip quivered.

"You don't live in New York, do you?" asked Mr. Barbour.

"No, sir; only came this morning. A man that lives in town owns a sloop and comes down to New York with potatoes and such, and when I told him I wanted to come and get a place he told me I could come with him, he would give me a lift so far; so here I am, and don't you want a boy?"

"I do not think I do want one just now; and it's such a shame for you to be out of school,"—and Mr. Barbour looked with pity on the sturdy little fellow before him.

"Well, sir, but you see we can't help it, mother and me, for"—here his eyes filled with tears and his voice was choked with sobs.

"I'll tell you, sir. You see father died only a little while ago, and he had been sick so long that mother had no money left after he was buried, and she sold her little house and paid her debts, and then there was only enough to pay her board this winter; and as I am all she has got, I must work and take care of mother, and so I came down here for a place."

"You are such a little scrap, what can you do?" ask Mr. Barbour, looking down with admiration on the mite before him.

"Oh! I don't know what you want boys to do in your stores down here, but I can sweep and dust, at any rate I'll do just what you tell me."

"Well my boy, you are a brave lad, and I will inquire among my friends and see if I can find a berth for you, but it's a pity to put a small fellow like you in a store."

"Oh, sir, if you only could get me a place, for I'm all the man there is to take care of mother!"

"Have you any friends in the city? Where will you stay to-night?" asked Mr. Barbour.

"I don't know anybody here, sir," answered the boy.

Mr. Barbour took a card and pencil from his pocket, and having written thereon, he directed the boy, whose name he found to be Ben Weston, so he could find the address written on the card.

"Now," said he, "if you will come to my counting-room to-morrow morning at No. 10 Bowling Green I will see what can be done for you. I guess my ships have not crossed the bar, and I need not watch longer."

Mr. Barbour, on entering his counting-room the next morning, saw a very small boy perched on a high stool before the desk, and was greeted by one of the gentlemen.

"Good morning, Mr. Barbour, here's a gentleman been waiting a long time to see you," with a wave of the hand pointing to the boy.

"Good morning, sir; did you find me a place?" said Ben Weston.

Now, Mr. Barbour had forgotten all about the little country boy. As he hesitated, the boy looked in his face with the shadow of disappointment creeping over its eagerness, and Mr. Barbour scarce knew what to say.

Deciding in his own mind to make a place for him in his room, he asked if he thought he could sweep out the counting-room and put it in order before the clerks commenced the day. Ben promised to do his best, and Mr. Barbour hired him. Ben's face fairly shone with joy, and so he commenced life in the great city.

Mr. Barbour was won't to say in telling the story afterwards he never had a more faithful clerk in his employ than Ben Weston proved to be.

He made himself so valuable that he was finally taken into the firm, and in after years was one of Massachusetts' ablest governors.

Boys, whatever you do, do faithfully with your might, and you will reap the benefit of earnest endeavor.—*Christian at Work.*

—Many humble saints need this reminder furnished by the *Interior*:

The humble Christian who can talk only to God, who sits silent in the great congregation, pleading in his heart for the descent of the Holy Spirit while the gospel is preached, may be as instrumental in working these modern miracles of grace, which we will call conversions, as the most eloquent preacher. Said a successful pastor to an aged and paralytic Christian who sat for years in a cushioned corner of the church, but was about to go away, "I shall miss you sadly. Indeed I don't know how I shall be able to preach without you. You have no idea how much you have helped me."

The final adjustment of accounts will shake things up to the amazement of some of us and perhaps in nothing more than in the things of the spiritual kingdom. Some who cut a large swath before the eyes of Time will harvest but lightly on the scales of Eternity, while others almost unknown here will bear in the great sheaves there. The eloquent sermon will be lost from the record but the midnight prayer will be enshrined in plush and gilt edges. The man, who showed his acuteness by criticising the preacher and his independence by staying away from meeting, will hide his head for shame, while the other, who honored the Lord's house and gave all his breath to prayer for the Lord's truth, will bow his head for a crown. It is difficult to realize, much more to appreciate, these level principles on which God conducts his kingdom and on which he will judge the world.

What Came of Uncle Jacob's Quitting.

BY S. R. MAY.

"Fie, man! Spoiling your breakfast," said Uncle Jacob, as he came into the garden where I was at work. "Too bad to spoil such nice breakfasts as your Mary gets."

"Why, Uncle Jacob," said I, "I was brought up to earn my breakfast before I ate it."

"Tut, tut, man! I didn't mean working in the pure air."

"What, then?"

"It's that nasty pipe that is spoiling God's sweet air for you. Spoils your appetite, too. I know all about it. I never had a good breakfast for twenty years, though your Aunt Rachel is the best cook you ever see. I used to find fault with my victuals, and tell my wife they didn't taste like mother's. The patient soul bore it all meekly for years; but one morning she said 'Jacob, did it never come into your mind that the difference between your mother's cooking and mine lays in *that pipe?* You didn't smoke when you ate her food. I try hard as I can to suit you; but you mix so much tobacco juice and smoke with the victuals that it spoils it all.'

"I didn't say nothing, because there wasn't nothing to say; but I kept thinking, yes, an' smoking, too, for awhile; but I didn't find any more fault with your aunt's cooking. One day, while I was down East for a spell, I was thinking what I could carry home to Rachel. It kept coming into my mind that the thing she would like best would be a husband with a pure breath and clean lips. So, with a mighty effort and a prayer for help, I said, "I'll do it. I'll quit now and forever, so help me God!'"

"Did you?" (taking my own meerschaum from my mouth.

"Quit?" said he, "I'd do it after I made up my mind to it if it killed me—that's your Uncle Jacob. There was an old lady that moved from our neighborhood, who lived right on the road where I was traveling. She'd known me from a boy. I went to her and I says, says I, 'Aunt Polly, I want to make you a present. I'm going to give you my pipe and tobacco.' The old lady smoked. I knew she never would quit, and I couldn't quite bear to throw the pipe away, I'd had it so long.

"'What fur?' says she.

"'Oh, I'm going to quit, Aunt Polly.'

"'Quit,' says she. 'Why, Jacob Gay! it will kill you. You can't do it.'

"See 'f I don't' says I, and I rode away.

"Its been twenty years and I haven't been back after it yet. And it didn't kill me either," said Uncle Jacob, throwing back his broad shoulders and striking his deep chest, and showing his teeth, sound and white, in spite of his seventy years.

"Didn't you hanker after your pipe?" I asked.

"Hanker! 'Tain't no word for it. Fact is, I don't believe there's any word strong enough. But I'd made up my mind. I was crosser than ten bears, and I didn't dare to go home for three weeks for fear I should abuse Rachel."

"What did Aunt Rachel say when you told her?"

"I never said nothin' about it at first; but I didn't smoke. If she noticed it, she didn't let on the first day. The second day, after dinner, she said, 'Jacob, seems to me I haven' seen you a smoke since you got home. You ain't sick, or nothin' be you? Does your business trouble you? said the kind soul, anxiously.

"'Poh,' said I; I have always smoked after I ate for thirty years.'

"'But I'm sure I haven't seen you nor smelt tobacco.'

"'Go an' look in my other clothes, Rachel, and see if you don't find my pipe and tobacco.'

"She went rumaging away for awhile, and at last said, 'Where be they, Jacob? she looked so astonished that I said, 'Well Rachel, you needn't look for 'em no more. I left the pesky things down in Burnham (that's a good place for 'em). You and I will never see 'em again. I've quit. Hain't smoked for three weeks, and don't mean to for all time.' You should have seen your aunt's face light up. She kinder sidled up to me and said:

"'Jacob Gay! I must say!' and then she kissed me, a thing she didn't often do. 'Spect she did't like the smell of my breath. I tell you Rachel's cooking was tip top after that. I've had good breakfasts for twenty years, no bad tastes in my mouth. Don't need to do anything to get up an appetite. Rachel's cooking is as good as mother's, and better, too. You can't think how pleased she is when I praise it, seeing I was on the other tack so long. There's the breakfast bell. Come, nephew, throw away your old pipe, and let us go in and tell Mary."

"I won't allow that my Uncle Jacob has stronger will-power than I. What he can do, his nephew ought," I said. "If he can stop smoking, I can.

"But don't forget where the strength comes from, my boy," said my uncle. "If you do, likely as not you'll fail. 'Tain't no easy job. I had a big tussle, and so will you. Don't try the job alone. But there's the bell again. Mary thinks we didn't hear."

I had just gathered a charming boquet of roses for my wife, and as we passed into the dining-room I placed them in the vase by her side, and hidden beneath the leaves I tucked my precious meerschaum. Mary thanked me for the flowers, but did not see the thorn among them. After Uncle Jacob had said grace, Harry, Jr., pulled Mary's sleeve and said:

"Oh, mamma see! There's papa's pipe in the roses."

Mary looked up quickly, the crimson rushing to her cheeks, but she only said:

"Why, Harry! She thought her husband was playing a silly joke.

I saw how she took it and hastened to say, "Mary, they are all yours—the roses and the thorn beneath them."

She gazed at me incredulously a minute, but my face re-assured her, and she asked:

"Harry, may I have it for my very own? To do just what I please with?"

"Yes!" I answered, "if you won't smoke it. I can't have my more smoking in this house."

The mistress excused herself from the table a moment, took the "old enemy," and sped away to the kitchen stove, wiped her eyes, washed her hands of the whole business, and then came back as sweet as one of the roses she put in her belt.

"Thank you, Harry," she said, and the wealth of love that looked from her eyes more than paid me for the struggle my determination had cost.

"It is all Uncle Jacob's doings. He's quit and so am I going to."

Then Uncle Jacob, at the earnest request, told the whole story of his battle and his victory. The boys, Harry, Jr., aged seven, and Walter, thirteen, listened with eager interest. When breakfast was over, they went out, and soon returned, Harry bringing a cigarette and Walter a bunch of cigars.

"There," said Harry, "I tried to smoke 'cause papa did; but I'll quit if he does."

"So will I," said Walter blushing.

"The fellows teased me to try it, and Will Courtney gave me these. I begun to like 'em, but I felt mean all the time when I looked at mother. I knew she'd feel bad to have me smoke, she hated it so. I'm glad it's out, mamma. I'm quite, too."

"I declare," said Uncle Jacob, "this is what I call an anti-tobacco club."

"Oh, papa," cried Walter, "lots of the boys are smoking just like us. I mean to get up a club; can I? May I ask some of them here, and have Uncle Jacob tell his story and we ours; may I?

"Ask your mother, boy," I answered.

"Indeed you may, Walter," replied Mary. "I'll help you all I can. We'll have a real Thanksgiving supper."

"Oh, mamma! how good you are. I'm so sorry I cheated you, said Walter."

"And I too! echoed Harry, Jr.

"And I three!" said Harry, Sr.

"But I have a confession to make," said Mary, softly.

"You, Mary!" I whispered.

"You, mamma!" cried the boys.

"You, Mollie!" said Uncle Jacob, with a queer smile. "Have you been smoking, too?"

"Not exactly," said mamma. "At least in another way. Do you remember, Harry, when we were first married we had a talk on smoking, and I hinted at the expense? You said I should have as much to spend, just as I pleased, as you smoked up. Come this way and see my smoking money?"

And we followed her to the library, which had been under lock and key for several days, for some mysterious reason.

"See these!" she said. "See these cases of new books. See this set of Encyclopedias. These are for you, Harry. This Dickens' set is for you, Walter, and these Artists' Histories and these Rollo Books are for you, little Hal; and this case of poems is for myself and my family, and it all came out of smoke."

Harry and Walter had their party, and started a Tobacco Reform Club. Walter may tell of that sometime, if he wishes, but more came of it than even this. The new books must be read. As I did not go to the office to smoke, I stayed at home more. We almost had our honeymoon over again. Then Mary coaxed me to the prayer meeting with her and I found the help I needed. So more "came of it" than I can tell you, and the end is not yet.—*The Advance.*

Divine Help.

"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." (1 Sam. 7: 12.)

The word hitherto seems like a hand painting to the past. Twenty years, or seventy, and yet "hitherto the Lord hath helped." Through poverty, through wealth, through sickness, through health, at home, abroad, on the land, on the sea, in honor, in dishonor, in perplexity, in joy, in trial, in triumph, in prayer, in temptation, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped us."

We delight to look down a long avenue of trees. It is delightful to gaze from end to end of the long vista, a sort of verdant temple, with its branching pillars and its arches of leaves. Even so look down the long aisles of your years at the green boughs of mercy overhead, and the strong pillars of loving kindness and faithfulness which bear up your joys. Are there no birds in yonder branches singing? Surely there must be many, and they all sing of mercy received hitherto.

But the word also points forward; for when a man gets up to a certain mark and writes "hitherto," he is not yet at the end—there is still a distance to be traversed. More trials, more joys, more temptations, more triumphs, more prayers, more answers, more toils, more strength, more fights, more victories. And then comes sickness, disease, old age and death. Is it over now? No; there is more yet awakening in Jesus' likeness, thrones, harps, songs, psalms, white raiment, the face of Jesus' the infinity of bliss. Oh, be of good courage, believer, and with grateful confidence raise thy "Ebenezer," for "He that helped thee hitherto,

Will help thee all thy journey through."

When read in heaven's light, how glorious and marvelous a prospect will the "hitherto" unfold to thy grateful eyes? Let us cheerfully adopt the language of Robinson:

"Here I raise my Ebenezer;
Hither by thy help I've come;
And I hope by the good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home."

—*Spurgeon*

TO THE DOUBTING ONES.—Ask thy soul these questions: 1. Whether there be any gain in doubting? Faith purifies the heart. 2. Whether there is anything more pleasing to God than to trust Him in and by Jesus Christ, when all comforts are out of the view, and when you see nothing but what is contrary to the promise? 3. Whether you must not venture upon Christ at the last, why not now? When a man has to go over a river, though he ride once and again into the water, and comes out saying, "I fear it is too deep for me," yet, considering that there is no other way for him but to resolve to venture. "For," said he, "the longer I stay the higher the water will rise, and there is no other way for me. I must go through at the last, why not at the first?" And so he ventures through. Thus it is with you. You say, "O, but my heart is not humble;" "O, but I am a great sinner, and how can I venture upon Christ?" Will thy heart be more humble by keeping it from Jesus Christ? and wilt thou be less a sinner by keeping from Him? No, certainly; for the longer you stay from Christ, the harder it will be to venture on Him at last. Wherefore, if there be even a poor, drooping, doubting, fearing, trembling heart reading these words, knowing that I do here in the name of the Lord call out to you, and say, "O soule—man or woman—venture, venture, venture upon Christ now! for you must come to trusting Him at last; why not now?"—*Sword and Trowel.*

The First Sign

Of failing health, whether in the form of Night Sweats and Nervousness, or in a sense of General Weariness and Loss of Appetite, should suggest the use of Ayer's Sarsaparilla. This preparation is most effective for giving tone and strength to the enfeebled system, promoting the digestion and assimilation of food, restoring the nervous forces to their normal condition, and for purifying, enriching, and vitalizing the blood.

Failing Health.

Ten years ago my health began to fail. I was troubled with a distressing Cough, Night Sweats, Weakness, and Nervousness. I tried various remedies prescribed by different physicians, but became so weak that I could not go up stairs without stopping to rest. My friends recommended me to try Ayer's Sarsaparilla, which I did, and I am now as healthy and strong as ever.—Mrs. E. L. Williams, Alexandria, Minn.

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