

spiritually seeing the son with the eyes of the soul, the child of God knows himself to be one with the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Hear the petition in the high priestly prayer: "Holy Father, I pray thee, that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (St. John 17:21).

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"MY FOOT STANDETH IN AN EVEN PLACE."

"My foot standeth in an even place," has a threefold significance. It is the expression of satisfaction on the part of the Sunday-child. It is the cry of relief on the part of him who has struggled hard and bitterly to succeed. It is the calm utterance of higher peace on the part of him who believes.

The imagery of the Psalmist is clear. A road can bear a twofold character. It can be smooth and even as a skittle ground, or macadam streets in cities and towns; or it can be like what we find in mountainous districts, where steep descents and ascents are common and the unevenness of the path brings weariness. With us, a stretch of sandy or muddy road may retard travel, but in the main our roads are even from north to south, so that no image could be derived from them for the pathway of our life. A way may seem long to us, it may be lonely, or it may repel us by its filthiness, but all this does not offer the antithesis which level road and mountain path present.

The Scripture, on the other hand, originated in

a mountainous country. The Psalmists have dwelt and wandered in the mountains. Of itself, therefore, their fertile minds would borrow images from life in the mountains by which to express the antitheses of life. And so the easy walk, with a light step, on a smooth, straight and even road suggested of itself to them the image of a life of which we would say, in the language of a sailor, that "everything went before the wind." On the other hand, the exertion, which makes even breathing difficult on the way where there is for hours together a steep, downward grade and then for hours again the grade is equally steep upward, presented quite as naturally the image of a traveler of whom the Dutch people would say again in terms of the sea: "He can scarcely keep his head above water." Hence in the expression: "My foot standeth in an even place," the self-sufficiency can assert itself of the man who has succeeded in everything he undertook, who has never known real adversity, and who, weaned from carking care, has never seen anything but sunshine on the pathway of his life.

These words, however, imply much more when they become the confession of a man who, disappointed every time, and foiled, saw all his efforts end in failure, but who kept on trying, would not give up, now fell and again climbed the steep mountain side, until at length the point was reached where the straight road through the highland stretched out itself before his feet, and prosperity began, imparting to him a happy existence under the fulfilment of his ideals.

But the phrase: "My foot standeth in an even place," attains its greatest fullness of meaning

when it becomes the expression of that assurance of faith, which with spiritual elasticity, knows how to overcome every difficulty of life on earth, and now proclaims with Habakkuk (3:17): "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; and there shall be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

Let the "Sunday-child," as the man is called who has never known reverses, be on his guard. A life without cares, without troubles, without sorrows and disappointments, easily spoils one. Optimism undoubtedly cultivates a happy state of mind, but it lacks power to strengthen character, to practice elasticity and to stretch it, and to become richer in noble treasures of the mind. But this is not the worst of it. It is far worse that the "Sunday-child" is so prone to attribute his good fortune to himself and to think that they who vainly struggle, owe their misfortunes to their simplemindedness. He is the man who always has good insight, and a correct estimate of things. Others allowed the right moment to go by unimproved. He was always ready to act at the proper time. And so his self-esteem increases, which cultivates his pride, and chokes pity for the sorrows and adversities of others. Or, in case such a child of fortune is still somewhat religiously inclined, he is easily tempted to regard himself as a special favorite of God, whose pathway, by reason of this Divine preference, was always smooth, and he lives in the expectation that in the providence of God his lot in life will be prosperous to the end. And so it goes on with growing conceit in the idea of one's own superi-

ority and of being a privileged character, until there comes a turn in life, and the sun goes hiding behind the clouds. Then everything collapses at once. Then there is no power of resistance. Then there is no disciplined strength. Then there is nothing to hold him up and to enable him to cope with his difficulties. And in the end he is lost in self-perplexity, having neither courage to live nor hope for the future.

This is entirely different with a man who is beset with difficulties. Every new year of his life brought him new troubles in the face of which to maintain himself. With one it was the struggle for existence with honor both of himself and family, to be successful in his calling and to accomplish what he began. With another it was a struggle against slander and envy. With a third it was a struggle for the sake of his conviction, of his views, and of obtaining an entrance for his ideas. Again, it was an endless struggle with impaired health. And again it was sorrow; trouble because of a child that brought disappointment, or grievous affliction in the loss of a child or a beloved wife by death. And though there are cases where such troubled times give place to sunnier days, there are others where literally for many years it is one constant struggle with anxiety, with never-ending disappointment, with no outlook upon relief. This frequently brings the bitter result that gloomy melancholy settles upon the heart; that irascible thoughts acquire the upper hand; and that haunted by the idea that every opportunity of life is lost, the struggle is abandoned, and emptied of will and courage, the days are pined away in ever deepening gloom.

But there have always been others who have persevered, who would not give up, who did not abandon hope, and who by great power of will reached the point, where they could breathe again, and opposition seemed broken. And thanks to the practice acquired in the struggle, they put forth a final, giant effort. And, indeed, they overcame. Now they were through. Now better days began. And with an inexpressible feeling of blessedness, as far as this earthly life can bring it, they exclaimed in a very different way: "God be praised, my foot standeth in an even place."

If this is already glorious, there is still a higher viewpoint. There are times when one can not row up against the stream of the ills of life. These can take hold of one's life so deeply as to continue with him unto the grave. Even he who is most grievously afflicted has no guarantee that better days will come. An outcome such as Job obtained, to no one is assured. It may please God to glorify the majestic grace of faith in a life, on which the sun of happiness has never shone. For poor Lazarus the hour of joy only came when he was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. We have no right to anything; and he who is no stranger to the knowledge of his sin will not demand from God happiness or deliverance out of trouble. He may pray for it and supplicate for it, but it always is: "Father, if this cup can not pass from me; not my will, but thine be done!"

But this is the glory, that wondrous faith not only reveals its power when suffering is turned into joy, but also, and even more, in suffering itself, and most of all when the sorrow accom-

panies us to the grave, and the cross casts its shadow across our path to the end. For this is the glory of faith, that it discloses another, a better way to us, a way on the heights of the mountain of God's holiness, which excels the ways of our earthly life, and dissolves all our sorrow, misery and affliction of soul in an higher vision. This way of faith passes not under the cloud which prevents the sun from shining on our path. He who travels this path has the clouds under him, and enjoys the free shining of the sun of grace. And then whether things in life succeed or fail, whether the struggle must be begun anew, or whether at last the struggle against what the world calls fate, is too much for him—in pleasure and distress, in sorrow and in joy, in prosperity and in adversity—the soul maintains its equipoise, the heart remains strong and fixed, and glorying in faith he says: Whatever be my lot, my foot standeth in an even place, which through faith, God has disclosed to me.

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“AN ABUNDANT REFRESHING.”

Life in the world above bears an entirely different aspect from life on earth. In the realm of glory is no sin, and consequently no redemption; no misery and therefore no deliverance. Neither can there be the transition from doubt to faith, from weakness to strength, from grief to comfort. In brief, all that by sin and misery brings constant changes, disturbance, transition, restoration and higher exaltation in our life on earth, is excluded from the life eternal.

This process of continuous change was foreign