

own will, but by reason of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God." Suffering is temporary, suffering is not apart from God, suffering is a means to an end, suffering is part of a great eternal scheme, suffering is closely allied with sonship. Suffering is closely allied with hope. He has a glorious vision (or may we call it a revelation?) in which not only man but the whole creation is to share, when we shall acknowledge that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the purpose and end accomplished by them. Hope is the keynote of his message.

2. It is a great comfort to know that sufferings are not purposeless, and not apart from God's will. But can we see any inconsistency between suffering and the Fatherhood of God? We believe in the Fatherhood of God on the authority of His Son Jesus Christ. Did Jesus consider that there was any want of love on His Father's part towards Himself? Was not Jesus a sufferer? He was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." He knew the meaning of suffering as we can never know it, and yet after all, His suffering life culminated with His agony upon the cross, He can say confidently, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit." Suffering was no bar to His realisation of the love and Fatherhood of Him from whom He came, and why should it be with us? The servant is not greater than His Lord. If Christ had not been a sufferer, then we might have had some difficulty, but with the life of Christ before us we can never doubt God's love. It is well for us to remember the words from the Epistle to the Hebrews, "But we beheld Him, who had been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of God he should taste death for every man. For it became Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many souls unto glory, to make the author of

their salvation perfect through sufferings." If Jesus could in any sense be made "perfect through sufferings," can we think that God can be wanting in love if our sufferings are the means of our perfection?

3. There is another side of suffering, which we often forget. The parent who in love for his child inflicts punishment often suffers far more than the child. Does God suffer then in our sufferings? God suffers every pang that we suffer, God suffers in us and with us. How often we misjudge God, and wrong His love and self-sacrifice. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son." Is there no suffering there? "I could have given myself, but I could never have given my son," said a working man. "That was love." What is the cross but the manifestation of our suffering God? God is not seated in majesty above the sufferings of His world, cold and indifferent to them, but in the very midst of them. Behold your suffering God, and take courage.

There is still another point which is often overlooked. There is no surer witness of God's love than His willingness to be misunderstood. He is working for our eternal welfare; He knows what is best; He is not a man that He should seek to please, to gain popularity, to make plans for to-day. He bears with His little-minded critics just because He is God, just because He is working for eternity.

4. Can you imagine what the world would be without its sufferers? It would be absolute selfishness; it would be hell. Men too easily forget God altogether in health and strength, forget what they are and whither they are going, forget that they must give an account for the use or abuse of what has been entrusted to them. Suffering reminds man of His transitoriness, and of the blessings which he has enjoyed and for which he is often so ungrateful. Suffering reminds us, "Lest we forget, lest we forget." The world's sufferers are the world's purifiers, because they appeal to the best in men and women, and draw out the better side of their natures. How much love and

sympathy and kindness and tenderness and brotherly feeling would there be in the world were it not for the world's sufferers? God uses no class of men and women so much as He does His sufferers. It is harder to bear than to do God's will, but the bearers are the world's lesser saviours, and their examples, their intercessions, help to bring Christ into His world which might otherwise become Christless. Christ did remove sufferings sometimes in order to teach the world that sufferings were not outside the control of God; but He sanctified all suffering, and raised it to a high and divine level. We can pray for the removal of our sufferings, therefore, if it is God's will, but we should also pray for their sanctification. Jesus, "for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, etc.," and is there no joy for the sufferer to-day in feeling that God is using him for such high and holy purposes?

6. Trust Jesus and then nothing can separate you from the love of God; nothing can prevent you saying "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." The patient sufferers will occupy a place very near to the Man of Sorrows when they exchange their cross for their crown.

"Take it on trust a little while, soon shall ye read the mystery right in the clear sunshine of His love." A.W.W.

Diocesan Notes.

The Rev. H. A. Favell, who has been acting as Assistant-Curate at Hastings, has been appointed to the Cure of S. Thomas', Auckland, and will be leaving the Parish and Diocese shortly. We regret very much to lose the services of Mr. Favell, and wish him every blessing in the difficult work to which he has been called. Mr. Noel Robertshawe, son of the Vicar of Dannevirke, will be ordained to the Curacy of S. Matthew's, Hastings, in Advent next. Mr. N. Robertshawe has already distinguished himself educationally, and we believe that he will prove to be a useful helper to the Vicar in the arduous work of the Parish.

Resignation.

The Rev. Allan Gardiner, Vicar of Havelock North and Editor of the WAIAPU DIOCESAN GAZETTE, has been