Hebrews 12:12-13 (J. Wilson Smith) 54267

Christian Truth: Volume 29, Lame and the Feeble, The: Acting on Certain Exhortations (12:12-13)

"Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed." Heb. 12:12, 13.

What a grand opportunity is afforded today for the practical carrying out of this important little exhortation! On all sides may be seen hands hanging down, and knees feeble, and lame pilgrims dotting the road to heaven.

It is not as when in triumph Moses could review his six hundred thousand warriors, fresh over the sea, and discover that "there was not one feeble person among their tribes" (Psalm 105:37), but the rather as when he beheld them, amid desert, the sad witnesses to their disobedience and unbelief, dejected and complaining as those who had "despised the pleasant land." Their feebleness, indeed, marked them, and lameness was seen on all hands. It must have been a sorry spectacle to their leader, though he bore with God-given patience their many rebellions!

So today! How different is the aspect of the Church from the fair picture she presented in the opening chapters of the Acts. Then all was fresh and in the bloom and vigor of a living, acting, and God-honoring faith. The world was kept outside by the force of the inherent fire that burned within; and consequently they walked "in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost," and "were multiplied." There were giants in those days, giants in faith and devotedness and power, just because the heart was fresh and warm and true.

They could not boast of learning; no, their foremost teachers, Peter and John, were regarded by the chief priests as "unlearned and ignorant men"; and ignorant, no doubt they were of the wisdom of this world and the learning of the college. But the lack was wonderfully counterbalanced by their knowledge of a few eternal facts, made theirs as eyewitnesses of the life and death, resurrection and ascension, of the Lord Jesus, held in living power in their souls by prayer and uncompromising faithfulness. Their little was rightly used, and yielded a splendid result.

Thank God for such grace—a Gideon's barley loaf, or a stripling's sling and stone, if only God be there, is all-sufficient. To the winds with Saul's armor and all that appertains thereto, when the Lord's battles must be fought. God wants no power or wisdom but His own; and wise are they who, even in this late day, believe and act thereon.

This is power, and He who was with His people of old, is with His people still. The bloom may be gone, but Christ abides. Circumstances may have changed, but the Word and Spirit remain. Now the call is that we should lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees. God calls us to act in grace toward each other.

Look around at the "great multitude of impotent folk" who swell the ranks of the Church; look upon the battlefield and see the vast number of wounded and maimed, and ask yourself if this is a day for smiting with the fist, or of hustling one another out of the way.

No, we are to watch so courageously that our evident joy and blessing may make the weak feel that it is their own assured portion also; and thus strength and healing will be administered to them instead of discouragement. But in order to do this, there must be personal dealing with God. Our own souls must be feeding on that which raises them above the perplexities of the day—feeding on the Word of God itself rather than on human thoughts of it. And thus, instead of leading souls away from their source of blessing, they will be established and comforted. It is charity that would lead us to the consideration of the weak and lame. Such abound on all sides, and that increasingly.

May our hearts be drawn more to the lame, in the bowels of Jesus Christ, and be enabled to show that the Church is something else than a field of battle and controversy, something else than a school for the acquisition of doctrine; that she has the truth as a matter of enjoyment, and that there is such a thing as "fellowship... with the Father, and with His Son"—the richest and most precious privilege on earth—in itself always a distinct testimony of triumph over the enemy.