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Crawfords Sum, 1854, Mar. 8/74

(12) The Benefit of Affliction

Psalms cxix, 71: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted: that I might learn Thy statutes."

I. Affliction is a taking away of something which has been made a dependence

~~The Psalmist says it is good~~

Its first effect is pain & sorrow; but the Psalmist says that in the end it is good. (1)

II. Get far enough away from it, at once to escape the sense of pain & to perceive its final results, & you see that it is so.

1. This (that affliction is good rather than bad) will be the only adequate explanation of its appearance, so intimately

2
interviews with most ^{the good} people's lives, ^{in God's Providence}
we to argue from presumption; but
we need not take that unsatisfactory
way. (2)

2. David learned much of God's
will by his afflictions

3. The Psalmist here (after captivity)
distinctly says (verse 67) "Before I was
afflicted I went astray, but now have
I kept Thy word;" and we know how
Israel never followed idolatry after
captivity.

4. This a common fact of history.
The gr^t works in all branches have
come out of suffering. Homer, ^{poor &} blind,
Dante disappointed, Bunyan & Milton
imprisoned, brought forth their poems.
Our country settled on pure institutions,

because affliction drove Puritans here.
The Reformation the result of Luther's ex-
cessive anguish of soul. The salvation
of men came out of Christ's suffering.
It seems to be a law of our world,
that good is a proper outcome of
affliction.

5. Your own experience - so
far as it goes - will corroborate this.
The things you know best, or hold
most dearly, came by suffering.

6. Once more - men regard those "best"
("good") who have passed thro' afflic-
tion. "Senators" = old men who have weathered
this trying world. Tragedy more
honored than comedy, in life ~~facted~~ ^{facted} or real.

4

The man^r who can bear trouble & has
looked up to, venerated, sought, while
the flippant has for his friends the
least worthy.

III. The Why. - Why is Afflic-
tion good? Because it teaches
God's statutes.

1. It awakens the sense of weak-
ness.

Evil things have ^{formerly} got in the
way of the afflicted one's right
use - even knowledge, deep -
of ~~the Divine~~ the Lord's gracious will
& ways.

But they were all helped, &
we kept, by the fact that some
one dependence kept the soul
from thinking of God; that taken away, they
must all fall.

illustrate

5 Benefits Afflic.

∴ The one, ^{thing made a} dependence taken away,
the soul sees its weakness

Is likely also to see its sinfulness

2. Affliction also leads the con-
science (with small voice) into power,⁽³⁾
& so turns attention to the Bible
How natural, & common a sol-
ace, in sick rooms, &c., the Bible!

Remarks

1. Let yr heart, yearning for the best, be guided by conscience to turn to Bible & Spirit

2. Rejoice to know that God chooses thus to use affliction; indeed, that this is the explanation of its existence