**THE EAGLE LIFE - STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT BY JOHN H. JOWETT**

**42. BAFFLED TO FIGHT BETTER by JOHN H. JOWET**

*"When I fall I shall arise."*

*Micah 2:8*

One of the primary secrets of a victorious life is to learn how to take defeat. We are not to be too much surprised by it. Still less are we to be startled and unnerved by it. We are to be prepared for it, and we are to allow for it in our plan, and we are to regard it as an incident on the way to final triumph. Now no man is ever really defeated who refuses to accept defeat. A man refuses defeat when in the very hour of apparent adversity he keeps his eyes glued on coming victory. The darkness never conquers so long as the soul is dreaming of the dawn. A man who can sing in the midnight begins to change his midnight into noon. "And at midnight Paul and Silas sang praises unto God, and the prisoners heard them.''

There is a great word in Ibsen's play, The Emperor Julian. It is spoken by the Christian, Apollinaris. "Verily I say unto you, so long as song rings out above our sorrows, Satan shall never conquer.'' It is the very truth of holy writ. But if we are thus to make our sorrows subordinate to our songs, if we are to rise above them, if our very defeats are to become the starting points of victorious campaigns, our faith in the risen Lord must be so strong that our Gethsemane is flooded with the glory of Olivet, and even on our Calvary we can rise into "heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

In Christ Jesus we can extract virtue from our defeats. Out of the eater can come forth meat. We can feed our wills upon our disappointments. Angels' food can be found on fields of apparent disaster. In this great way we can command stones to become bread, and we can emerge, like giants refreshed, from the wilderness and the solitary place.

Our Lord is greatly honoured when we refuse defeat. No higher eulogy can the enemy pay to Christian souls than to say that "they know not when they are beaten." A song in the night is one of the most arresting witnesses to the uplifting power of redeeming grace.