**good servant of Christ Jesus, training  
thyself in** (the idea of the word used is not  
*‘to nourish oneself with,’* but to grow up  
amongst, or to be trained in. The present  
tense denotes *continuance* in this training :  
see 2 Tim. iii. 14) **the words of the faith**  
(the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel),  
**and of the good instruction, the course of  
which thou hast followed** (‘hast followed  
along, by tracing its course and accom-  
panying it”).

**7.**] **But profane and  
anile fables** (see notes on ch. i. **4** and **7**,  
and Introd.) **decline** (literally, ‘excuse thyself from’), **but rather exercise thyself for**[**unto**] **godliness,** **unto**, i.e., with a view  
to, as an athlete with a view to the games.

**8.**] **For the exercise** (gymnastic train-  
ing: see below) **of the body is to small extent**(‘*for but a little,*’—in reference only to a  
small department of a man’s being) **profitable** (to what sort of exercise does he allude ?  
Many take it as alluding to corporal austerities for religion’s sake: so Calvin. But  
against this are two considerations: 1)  
that these are not now in question, but the  
immediate subject is the excellence of being  
trained and thoroughly exercised in piety :  
2) that if they were, it would hardly be  
consistent with his previous severe characterization of these austerities, ver. 3, to  
introduce them thus with even so much  
creditable mention. It is therefore far  
better to understand the words with  
Chrysostom and many others, of mere  
gymnastic bodily exercise, of which the  
Apostle says, that it has indeed its uses,  
but these uses partial only): **but godliness** (the first member of the antithesis  
contained the *means, bodily exercise: this,  
the end, godliness ;—that which is sought  
by exercise unto godliness*) **is profitable  
for all things** (not one portion only of a  
man’s being, but every portion of it, bodily  
and spiritual, temporal and eternal), **having**  
(seeing that it has) **promise of life, both  
that which is now, and that which is to  
come.**

**9.**] **Faithful is the saying  
and worthy of all acceptation** (see on ch.i.  
15. The words refer to what *follows,* not  
to what went immediately before: see on  
for below. The connexion is with the  
mention of the *life to come.* Godliness has  
the promise of that life attached to it,  
according to the well-known Christian  
saying which follows. Otherwise verse 10  
comes in disjointedly and unaccountably).  
**For** (for is introduced from a mixture of two  
constructions, rendering a reason for *“and  
that which is to come,”* as if *“ Faithful is  
the saying”* had not been inserted. We  
have the same construction in 2 Tim. ii. 11)  
**to this end** (viz. the salvation implied in  
that which follows) **we** (Christians in general) [both] toil (more than *labour:* it  
gives the idea of ‘toil and moil’) and  
suffer reproach (climax : we might toil and  
be had in honour, but as it is, we have  
both fatigue and shame to bear), **because  
we have set our hope** (the perfect refers  
to the time when the strong resolve and  
waiting began, and to its endurance since  
that time) **on the living** (inserted for emphasis and solemnity, to bring out the fact  
that the God in whom we trust is a