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THE
GOSPEL STANDARD,

OR

FEEBLE CHRISTIAN'S SUPPORT.

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THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.”—Matt. v. 6.

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”—2 Tim. i. 9.

“The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.”—Rom. xi. 7.

“If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”—Acts vii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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ADDRESS TO OUR READERS.

When we consider for a moment how widely dispersed our periodical is, how numerous its readers, what a proneness there is in our nature to look to and lean upon man, and, therefore, how influential for good or evil the *Gospel Standard* may be, we feel what a difficult, and yet what an important post we occupy. But, combined with this, arises the feeling, how little competent we are to fulfil our office as it should be fulfilled. What judgment, what experience, what discernment, what singleness of eye, what honesty and faithfulness, what patience, gentleness, and meekness, what firmness, what forbearance, what spirituality of mind, what savour and power resting on the soul, are necessary to constitute such Editors as the *Gospel Standard* seems to require!

In all these points we freely and candidly confess we come very short, even if we do not fail altogether.

It is not difficult to represent to ourselves what we should be; the difficulty is to be it. It is with us, in some measure, as with a minister of the gospel who has some view of what that office is and what it demands. There are times and seasons with him when he sees what qualifications are requisite in one who stands up in the name of the Lord—what experience, what knowledge,

what wisdom, what grace, what gifts it requires. And as he looks and looks at what a minister of the gospel *should be*, and at what *he is*, he sinks almost away at the sight, and feels as if he could never enter a pulpit again.

But, perhaps, when he is ready to give up all hope, some such word as this comes to his mind with gentle power: "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness;" and he is led to see and feel that "his sufficiency is of God." Or there falls upon him some recollection of helps in times past, and of some blessing that has rested upon his ministry; or some solemn feeling that, having put his hand to the plough, he must not look back; and thus he is led, amidst all his discouragements, still to go on with the work.

Without for a moment putting our situation and labours upon a level with the ministry of the gospel, we may still feel a similarity. Have the servants of the Lord their discouragements? We have ours. Have they their encouragements? We are not without them. Do their chief discouragements arise from a view of their own unfitness for the work? Ours spring from the same source. And are their chief encouragements drawn from the Lord condescending to use them as instruments for the good of his people? We would fain hope our chief encouragements are derived from the same fountain.

We trust we may, without presumption, pursue our parallel a little farther. Men of God have felt and said, that were but one soul called with a heavenly calling under their ministry, it would be an ample recompense for all their labours. We are sure that a similar blessing would amply recompense us.

But if the Lord be at all pleased to bless their labours, or that seducing snare, popularity, attend them, what ballast they need lest they be lifted up with pride, and think themselves something when they are nothing! What discoveries are needful of their own vileness, that they may learn to abhor themselves in dust and ashes! Similar discoveries are necessary for us to bring and keep us in our right spot. So much of our own folly and carnality attaches itself to all that we write, that we would fain throw aside our pen, and never, for any public purpose, take it up again.

Other points of resemblance occur to our minds, but we will not pursue our comparison farther, lest we seem to arrogate too much to ourselves.

We turn, therefore, to another subject, one not wholly inappro-

priate to the commencement of a new year, the close of which some eyes that rest upon these pages may never see.

As dying men, then, speaking to dying men, we would simply mention what blessings we would desire for our spiritual readers and correspondents and for ourselves; and if the Lord has given us eyes to see and hearts to desire those spiritual blessings with which he has blessed the church in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, there is every encouragement for us to plead with his gracious Majesty that He would bestow them upon us.

1. *The fear of the Lord*, as the beginning of wisdom, we may well place at the head of these spiritual blessings. What a treasure, (Isa. xxxiii. 6,) what a fountain of life, (Prov. xiv. 27.) what a safeguard from evil, (Prov. xvi. 6,) what a wise and faithful bosom-counsellor should we find this precious fruit of the Spirit through the year! Blessed with this grace in living exercise, we need fear no evil, for it must be "well with them that fear God." (Eccl. viii. 12.)

2. *Living faith, drawn forth by the blessed Spirit, upon the Lord of life and glory*, is another blessing which we would desire to be abundantly favoured with. When such blessings are attached to and accompany living faith, when it has such a transforming, purifying, world-subduing, sin-vanquishing, lust-mortifying power, well may we sigh after its exercise and increase! And if by being daily plagued with the workings of infidelity and unbelief, and sometimes favoured with a little faith in exercise, we have experimentally learned the amazing contrast, we shall certainly desire to be increasingly favoured with that "gift of God" whereby Jesus becomes dear, near, and precious to the soul.

3. *Love to the Lord and his dear people* shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost—heaven's crowning gift—that divine grace, without which all attainments are valueless, (1 Cor. xiii.)—what a blessing is this! *Love to God!* what balm would this be against all the trials, sufferings, and afflictions which we may be called upon to endure during the coming year! *The love of the brethren!* how many crooked things would it straighten, how many divisions would it remove!

4. *A broken and contrite spirit*,—that best, that acceptable sacrifice, (Psal. li. 17.,) we cannot but in our right mind desire. The means indeed whereby that brokenness and contrition are produced, the series of trials and afflictions which may be required to bring it

forth, our coward flesh may well shrink from. And yet, when we see and feel the beauty and blessedness of such a frame, what a weanedness it produces from all earthly things, and what union and communion are realized through it with the Man of Sorrows, we are desirous to be favoured with it at almost any cost.

5. *Sincerity and simplicity towards God*,—that we may be able to lay our hearts bare before him, and say, “Thou God seest me,”—how desirable it is in all our dealings Godward, in all our dealings manward, and in all our dealings selfward, to have this grace in living exercise! Carrying, as we do, such a deceitful heart in our bosom, must we not, shall we not, inevitably go astray unless blessed with this divine grace?

Amidst all the turnings and windings of our treacherous heart, is not this conviction still deeply and firmly engraved within, that we cannot deceive nor escape the eye of Omniscience? And yet, left to ourselves, how insincere do we become to God, to man, and to self! God, of his infinite mercy, make and keep us sincere and simple before him, for if wrong there, we are wrong everywhere.

6. *A spirit of prayer and supplication* poured out upon us, whereby we shall besiege, as it were, the throne of grace night and day,—that effectual fervent prayer which availeth much,—that almost unceasing cry which dwelt in the bosom and came from the lips of Hannah, Hezekiah, David, and the saints of old—that distinguishing feature of the elect, (Luke xviii. 7).—O may this grace of the Spirit be poured out upon us, and abide in us throughout the year! And in our various trials and afflictions, instead of fleeing to man and leaning upon an arm of flesh, may we look to and lean wholly on the Lord.

7. *Patience and resignation under all trials and afflictions*—that “meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price,” (1 Pet. iii. 4).—that submission of soul to the righteous dealings of the Lord—that kissing of the rod—that moulding of the will in holy conformity to the will of God—that tender pliancy to the hands of the heavenly Potter—is not this a grace to be coveted more than house or lands, than health and strength, than all the smiles of men? If indulged with this frame, things cannot go wrong with us. Afflictions become blessings, temptations lose their keen edge, and trials are endured as a part of our allotted portion.

8. *A simple, childlike, confiding trust* in the God of all our mercies, the Object of all our desires, and the Source of all consolations—

how precious, how desirable a blessing! Instead of trembling at every leaf, of anxiously fearing approaching trials, of looking droopingly forward to the next day's dawn lest the morn should bring forth some new trial, blessed with this grace, we should trust and not be afraid, we should not be afraid of any evil tidings, (Psalm cxii. 7,) nor add to the real sufferings of the day the imaginary sufferings of the morrow.

9. *Communion with the sacred Three-in-One*—that only source of all fruitfulness, (John xv. 4, 5,) that sure pledge of heaven, that antepast and foretaste of rest, peace, and bliss in the bosom of God to all eternity—to be favoured from time to time with a measure of this choice blessing, may well be the object of our earnest desire. To see light in God's light, to feel life flowing into our soul out of the fulness of Jesus, to be of one mind, heart, will, and spirit with the Lamb of God, and thus realize and prove an eternal, spiritual, and inseparable union with him; how this would raise us up above this vain world, fill our souls with humility and love, subdue the unbelief and rebelliousness of our carnal mind, and make us and manifest us Christians indeed!

10. *Fruitfulness in every good word and work*—that our religion may not be merely on our lips, but be carried out in our life; that we may shine as lights in the world, and make it manifest that God himself is the Author of our faith and that we have something more than a name to live, must in our right mind be earnestly desired by us. Alas, alas! for our barrenness and unfruitfulness, so that often we seem rather to vegetate than live a life of faith, rather to creep and crawl than run the way of God's commandments with an enlarged heart, rather to be cumber-grounds than trees of righteousness which the Lord hath planted. How much we need the Lord to work in us, not only to *will*, but also to *do*, of his good pleasure!

Were these blessings more earnestly and intensely desired by us, were we enabled more constantly, believingly, and perseveringly to plead with the Lord for them, and above all, were they bestowed upon us by his bounteous hand, how many snares should we find broken, evils seen and departed from, and that spiritual-mindedness felt which is life and peace! It would make fruitful editors, fruitful correspondents, and fruitful readers.

But we pause; not because our list of desired and desirable blessings is exhausted, but that we may not occupy too much space. We can make no promises what we shall do, or what we shall be in

the coming year; but we hope we shall, with increased and increasing sense of our own weakness, and increased and increasing desire for the Lord's strength to be made perfect in that weakness, continue to contend for the truth as it is in Jesus, so far as we are acquainted with it; and may the God of all grace condescend to use our monthly messenger, and bless its pages to his own glory and the church's good.

THE EDITORS.

THE SWORD OF JUSTICE AWAKENED AGAINST
GOD'S FELLOW.

PART OF A SERMON BY RALPH ERSKINE, PREACHED BEFORE THE
ORDINANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, JULY 3, 1720.

"Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my Fellow, saith the Lord of hosts."—Zech. xiii. 7.

This text, sirs, is a very wonderful one as ever a poor mortal man preached upon; for in it there is a cloud, a black cloud, a cloud of divine wrath and vengeance, a bloody cloud, the cloud of Christ's bloody passion which we are to celebrate the memorials of this day; but, like the cloud that led Israel in the wilderness, though it had a black side towards Christ, yet it has a bright and light side towards all the Israel of God; for this cloud of blood distills in a sweet shower of blessings unto poor sinners. There is a light in this cloud wherein we may see God, in Christ, reconciling the world to himself.

This verse presents us with a clear prediction of the sufferings of Christ, and the disposition of his disciples thereupon: "Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones;" which our Lord expressly applies to himself and his disciples. (Matt. xxvi. 31; Mark xiv. 27.) So that we need not stand to inquire of whom the prophet here, or rather, of whom God here speaks; for the words of our text are the words of God the Father, giving orders and commission to the sword of his justice to awake against his Son, when he had undertaken to become our Surety. More particularly in the words you may notice these three things:—

1. A solemn call and summons given to God's vengeance or vindictive justice, to rendezvous its forces and march forth in battle array, in all circumstances of terror. "Awake, O sword."

2. The party against whom this dreadful battle is proclaimed, this terrible sword is brandished. Must it not be against sinners? Nay, but the sinner's Surety: "against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my Fellow." Not against the sheep, but the Shepherd; not against a Shepherd simply, but against "*my* Shepherd;" not against mankind, but a man; not against a man simply, a mere man, but "the Man that is my Fellow," mine equal.

3. By whose orders, or at whose instance this summons to the bloody battle is given. Why, it is "the Lord of hosts" that says it; it is he that gives the commission, and orders the sword to be drawn.

Now the summons is very awful: "Awake, O sword, against him." If he will be a Surety, he must be a sacrifice; if he will be a sacrifice, he must be slain; for "without shedding of blood there is no remission." It is not a charge to a rod to correct him, but to a sword to slay him; for "Messiah the Prince must be cut off, though not for himself." (Dan. ix. 26.) It is not the sword of war to which he gives this charge, that he may die in the bed of honour, but the sword of justice, that he may die as a criminal upon an ignominious tree. This sword must "awake" against him; it must not rest, cannot be quiet nor satisfied, till it be drunk in his heart's blood. It is not called upon to awake and frighten him, but to awake and smite him. Not with a lazy, drowsy blow, but an awakened one, even a horrible, terrible blow.

The party against whom the sword is called to awake is very glorious; the description of him here is very magnificent: "Awake against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my Fellow;" described in his office, "my Shepherd," in his person, God-man, "my Fellow." Men thrust him through as a *foolish* shepherd, and God thrusts him through as the *good* Shepherd, as his own Shepherd, the Shepherd of his own flock, that he might purchase the flock of God with his own blood. As Mediator, he is God's Shepherd, who undertook to feed the flock, and to lay down his life for his sheep; and against "the man that is my Fellow," or, "the man my Fellow," the man who is God as well as man, who "thought it no robbery to be equal with God."

Finally, the Party giving these orders to incensed justice to awake against him is as wonderful, the Lord of Hosts; that Jehovah who has all the hosts of heaven, earth, and hell at his call; the Lord of hosts, that is, Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God, essentially considered, giving a commission to infinite justice to awake against the Second Person of the Godhead, considered as Surety and Mediator, God-man.

Now, from the words thus shortly opened, we might observe many doctrines, but I confine myself to this one, namely:

OBSER. That by special orders from Jehovah, the great God of hosts, the man Christ, his Shepherd and Fellow, did fall a sacrifice to the awakened sword of infinite justice. "Awake, O sword."

When nothing among the creatures could be found to deliver the soul of the sinner from going down to the pit, God himself found a ransom, (Job xxxiii. 24;) he found an atonement, by setting forth Christ to be the "propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." (Rom. iii. 25, 26.) We sinful creatures, both ministers and people, should all have fallen a sacrifice to the sword of God's wrath and vengeance for ever because of our sins; but, behold, he finds a ransom—he sets forth

Christ to be the propitiation. Whenever he is set forth, the sword falls upon him, and awakes against him who was the Shepherd, that the sheep might escape.

I might here premise many useful particulars presupposed in this doctrine, namely, that it supposes a covenant of works broken, and so justice enraged against men. A covenant of redemption made, a counsel of peace between Jehovah and Christ, for man's relief; and, which I reckon much the same with the former, a covenant of grace established in Christ; he engaging to fulfil the condition of the covenant of works, which we had broken, to obey the law which we had transgressed, to satisfy the justice which we had offended, to bear the wrath which we had incurred; whereupon the sword of the Lord awakes against him, and all the squadrons of enraged fury march forth against him, with infinite horror and terror: "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd." But omitting all that might be supposed and presupposed to this doctrine, I shall endeavour to confine myself as closely as possible to the several parts of the text and doctrine, by prosecuting it in the following method, namely—

I. To inquire into the character of the Person against whom this sword does awake.

II. The nature and quality of this sword that did awake against him.

III. How this sword did awake against him, by showing what may be imported in this expression: "Awake, O sword."

IV. What special hand the Lord Jehovah, the Lord of hosts, had in ordering or calling of this sword to awake against this glorious Person.

V. The reasons of the doctrine, why the Lord of hosts ordered the sword of justice to awake against his Shepherd, and, the man that is his Fellow.

VI. Draw some inferences for the application of the whole, in a suitableness to the work of the day (the Lord's supper.)

I. Who is this that the sword of justice must awake against? The character of the Person is very great and glorious in the words of our text: "My Shepherd, the man that is my Fellow;" that is, in short, God-man Mediator; for, being here described in his person and office, I shall touch a little at both in the following order:

1. His divine nature, as God's "Fellow." 2. His human nature, "the man" that is my Fellow. 3. The conjunction of both these in one person, "the man that is my Fellow." 4. His mediatorial office, "my Shepherd."

1. Consider the account we have of his divine nature; "My Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts." Let Arians and Socinians blaspheme this wonderful Person; here is an article of our creed, that Christ is God's Fellow, God's equal: "Who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God;" and there-

fore he himself says, (John x. 30,) "I and my Father are one." But here consider, 1. Wherein he is God's Fellow; and 2. Why, as our Redeemer, it behoved him to be God's Fellow.

First. Wherein, or in what respect, is he God's Fellow? I answer, He is God's Fellow, not as he is a Mediator, taking upon him the form of a servant, and becoming the Father's servant in the work of our redemption; but he is God's Fellow in these six respects:

(1.) He is God's Fellow in point of nature and essence; Christ is God essentially, as well as the Father and the Holy Ghost, though personally distinct from both; for neither the Father nor the Holy Ghost was incarnate, or took on our nature, but Christ the Second Person of the glorious Trinity; who, though personally distinct, yet is essentially one with the Father and Spirit: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John i. 1.) And it is sure there is but one God: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, one Jehovah." (Deut. vi. 4.) "In Christ our Redeemer dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. ii. 9.) "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." (1 John v. 7.) And in the 20th verse of that chapter, "We know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding to know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ; this is the true God, and eternal life."

(2.) He is God's Fellow in point of property; even in all his essential properties, which is much the same with the former. Is God omnipotent? so is Christ; he is "the wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God." Is God omnipresent? so is Christ: "Lo, I am with you always, to the end of the world." Is God omniscient? so is Christ: "Thou that knowest all things, knowest that I love thee," says Peter. Is God unchangeable? so is Christ: "The same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Is God eternal? so is Christ: "Before Abraham was, I am." He is "the King eternal, immortal, the only wise God." He is God's Fellow in all these respects.

(3.) He is God's Fellow in point of will and consent; what the Father wills, Christ wills. Hence it was his meat and drink to do his Father's will who sent him: "I delight to do thy will, O my God." It is true, as man he had a will distinct from his will as God, and so diverse from the Father's will; though yet this did act still in subordination to the will of God. Hence when the bitter cup is put to his mouth, he prays, "O my Father, if it be thy will, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done;" yet, as God, his will is one and the same with the Father's will.

(4.) He is God's Fellow in point of work: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." (John v. 17.) Christ's works are not only like unto the Father's, but the same in substance, as flowing from one and the same essence and power; for "what things soever the Father doth, these also doth the Son likewise." (John v. 19.) He acts not as instrument subordinate; but, as there is

a unity in the work, so also in the manner of it, by the same power, wisdom, liberty, and authority, only the order of operation being observed. And we find all the works proper to God ascribed to Christ; as creation, "All things were made by him;" preservation, "Upholding all things by the word of his power;" redemption, the donation of the Spirit, raising himself from the dead, the institution of ordinances and offices in his church, and the judging of the world—in all these he is God's Fellow.

(5.) He is God's Fellow in point of honour and worship. All men are to honour the Son even as they honour the Father. They are to believe in him: "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." (John xiv. 1.) They are to hope and trust in him: "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way. If once his wrath begin to burn, blessed are they that trust in him."

(6.) He is God's Fellow in point of happiness and felicity: "Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen." (Rom. ix. 5.) As he was blessed and happy from all eternity in his Father's bosom, being "ever by him, and brought up with him; and being daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth; and his delights were with the sons of men," (Prov. viii. 30, 31,) so he ever was and will be blessed with him. It is true there was a time when the Son of God was humbled; when this God blessed for ever became a curse for us; but notwithstanding, his essential glory was never diminished; as God, he was as great and blessed on the cross and in the grave, as ever he was. Well, thus, as God, is he every way God's Fellow. O how fearfully was he humbled! God's Fellow, and yet a babe, a servant, a sufferer, a sacrifice to the awakened sword of justice! The Governor of all becomes a subject! Should an emperor become a fly, it would not be such a humiliation. O how sadly was the world mistaken about Christ, that took him to be a base fellow, a pitiful fellow! But little did they know that he was God's Fellow. O how glorious is the love of Christ to sinners! God's Fellow receiving the stroke of the sword of divine justice in their room!

Second. Why he behoved to be God's Fellow that was our Redeemer? It was necessary that our Redeemer should be God's Fellow—

(1.) In regard of merit. His obedience to the death could not be sufficient to satisfy the law and the Law-Giver, to be a full ransom, and a full price of redemption, if it had not been truly and properly meritorious; and this it could not be, if he had not been God's equal, as well as man. Our sins were an infinite evil, and God's justice required infinite satisfaction. Now, there could be no satisfaction of infinite value, but by a person of infinite value; and as there is no such person but God, therefore our Redeemer must be God's equal, otherwise he could not give the satisfaction required.

(2.) In regard of power. Our Redeemer must be such a one as could go through all the difficulties that lay in the way of redemp-

tion, triumphing over all opposition from God, men, and devils, from heaven, earth, and hell. The weakest of these were too strong for human nature; therefore, that our Redeemer might overcome death, bind the strong man, break down the gates of hell, and cut in sunder the bars of sin, he must be God as well as man, even God's equal, God's Fellow. And also that he might be able for the application, as well as the impetration of man's redemption, not only able "to save to the uttermost all that come to God through him," but able to draw poor stubborn souls to himself, by his own power, and make them willing.

(3.) Our Redeemer must be God's Fellow in regard of the dignity of the work. His honour and dignity in being a Redeemer and Mediator between God and men was too great for any creature, supposing any creature had been able for it; this crown of glory was not fitting for any mere creature's head. An office of dignity on an unworthy person, is most unsuitable; the dignity was so great, that even Christ himself, though God's equal, might not take it upon him, till he was called to it of God. (Heb. v. 4, 5.)

(4.) Our Redeemer must be God's Fellow, in regard of the covenant of grace, which was the groundwork and foundation of all. Since our Redeemer was to make a covenant with God for us, it was necessary that he should be with God at the making of it, and know the depths of God's counsel in it, and perfectly know for whom he was to satisfy, and upon what condition. Now, this covenant being as ancient as eternity, and seeing God should have our Redeemer by him to conclude the covenant and bargain with him, who of all the creatures were capable of this? who, of all the creatures have known the mind of the Lord, and being his counsellor have taught him? God might have said to all the creatures, as to Job in another case, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?" (Job xxxviii. 4.) Where were you when the plan of redemption was laid, when the names of the redeemed ones were put in the book of life? But our Redeemer was then by him. (Prov. viii. 30.) He thus becomes our "everlasting Father," begetting us, with the Father, in the womb of eternal election.

(5.) Our Redeemer must be God's Fellow in regard of the place he was to have in the covenant, with respect to God. Who among all mere creatures was fit to have all power in heaven and in earth committed to him? Power to bequeath such blessings as peace, pardon, reconciliation, justification, and eternal life? Power by his blood to confirm and establish all the promises of the covenant? Christ Jesus did, through the eternal Spirit, offer up himself on Calvary without spot to God; and then, the apostle infers, for this cause he is the Mediator of the new testament. Yea, Christ was to be the Surety of this testament; Surety for God to us, to make out all the blessings and promises of the covenant to us; and Surety for us to God, to satisfy law and justice in our room. What creature was able to do this? or if any creature should be supposed to be able, was it fit that God should put such a trust in any creature? No.

(6.) Our Redeemer must be God's Fellow in regard of the place he was to have with respect to us. Our Redeemer must be the Object of our faith and love. What creature in heaven, or in earth, could be a sufficient prop and foundation for our faith? Had any mere creature undertaken to be our Redeemer, we could never fully have depended upon him, but should always have been afraid he had miscarried; therefore it was requisite, to quiet our fears, that our Redeemer should be God's Fellow. (See Isaiah xxxv. 3.) He is God, therefore fear not. Our hearts could never have been at full rest otherwise. I remember, when Israel were going through the wilderness, they were to meet with much opposition; God promises to send an angel with them. It is said, "All the people mourned for these evil tidings," that God himself would not go up; yea, Moses himself was fearful of the mismanagement of a mere angel; therefore says Moses, "If Thou go not with us, carry us not up hence;" (Exod. xxxiii. 2, 3, 4, 15;) and again, verse 12, "Thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send." They thought his sending of an angel was as his sending none at all. Thus, you see, people's fears would never be quieted by the government of an angel, though one of them was able to destroy a whole host in one night. Even so our hearts could never be at rest, though God sent an angel for our deliverance; therefore God sent his own Son, his Fellow, that we might fully trust him and depend upon him, that we might place all our satisfaction in him, as a full portion, so as to seek no further. Thus you see he is God's Fellow. And why, as our Redeemer, he behoved to be so.

2. Consider the account we have of his human nature, "*The Man that is my Fellow.*" Here I would show you, 1. What kind of a man Christ became; 2. Why our Redeemer behoved to be a man.

First. What kind of a man he became. Why, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us;" "Great is the mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh." "He took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham." More particularly—

(1.) He was a poor man; a man very poor and mean in outward respects; poor in his birth; he was not born of a queen, nor laid in a palace; but born of a poor virgin, and laid in a manger. He was poor in his life; several people ministered to him of their substance; yea, "the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, but the Son of man had not where to lay his head." "Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor." Let not poor people quarrel at their lot. Christ, God's equal, was a poor man.

(2.) He was a distressed man; "A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;" a man of the same infirmities with us, except sinful ones: "In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest;" (Heb. ii. 17;) and, "He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Heb. iii. 15.) He was hungry, thirsty, weary, tempted, afflicted, and every way distressed. Let no distressed persons think it strange that they are so, since God's Fellow was a distressed man.

(3.) He was a true man. He had a true body and a reasonable soul; his body was nailed to the tree; they pierced his hands and his feet; his soul was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death. As man, he went through all the ages of men: first, he was conceived, then he was a babe, next a youth, and at last came to the perfect stature of a man. But,

(4.) He was a good man, a holy man. Immaculate was the conception of the holy child Jesus. We come defiled into the world; but Christ brought no sin into the world with him; and all the devils could not make him sin, for "the prince of this world could find nothing in him," either of original or actual sin. "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin;" but was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." Never was there such a holy man upon earth. (See Heb. v. 7.) "He was heard in that he feared," or, he was heard for his piety and holiness. Since Adam fell, never was there a man but this, that was heard and accepted of God for his own piety and holiness.

(5.) He was a wise man, the wisest man that ever was. Solomon was very wise, but, behold, a wiser than Solomon is here. He answered the learned doctors to their amazement, when he was twelve years old; yea, all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. (Luke ii. 47.) He sometimes asked questions to which no man was able to answer a word, nor durst ask him any more questions, (Matt. xxii. 46,) and no wonder, for he was the power of God, and the wisdom of God, and in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and hence he revealed the glorious truths that were before concealed. He was a wise man indeed. Yet,

(6.) He was a man who could die as we, and he actually died as we must. He was put to a painful and shameful death; and his cursed death, which we may yet call his blessed death, we are to commemorate this day. This man fell a sacrifice to the awakened sword of infinite justice; the Shepherd was smitten and slain.

In a word, he is a wonderful man; to all eternity his name shall be called Wonderful. (Isaiah ix. 6.) This wonderful man is our peace-maker with God. "This man shall be the peace when the Assyrian cometh into our land." This man is our only covert from the furious storm of divine wrath. "A man shall be a hiding-place from the storm, and a covert from the tempest." But,

Second. Why must our Redeemer be a man? Why, for the following reasons:

(1.) He must be a man in regard of the transaction between the Father and the Son. Not only was God's truth engaged in the promise that the seed of the woman should be sent, that to "us a child should be born, to us a Son given, and that a virgin should bring forth a son, and call his name Immanuel," God with us, God in our nature; and not only was God in his infinite wisdom resolved, in the weakness of our nature, to perfect his own strength and get the greater glory, and that as "by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one many should

be made righteous;" but also, it being agreed between the Father and the Son, in the covenant of redemption or grace, that the Son should offer up a sacrifice for us; it was also agreed that there must be "somewhat to offer," (Heb. viii. 3,) somewhat of greater value than all the world, for nothing could be a sufficient sacrifice for the expiation of sin. If Christ had not been man, he could have had nothing to offer up as a sacrifice to God. God himself provided a sacrifice, as he did a ram in the room of Isaac: "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not; a body hast thou prepared me." This body, this sacrifice, was provided in the counsel of peace, and being thus provided, Christ comes cheerfully to offer it: "Lo, I come; I delight to do thy will, O my God."

(2.) He must be a man in regard of us. He could not have redeemed us, if, according to the law, the right of redemption had not belonged to him as our kinsman; (Lev. xxv. 25;) and being man, he is fit to communicate to us the things of God in such a way as we are capable to receive. If God should appear to us immediately, in his terrible glory, we should be afraid of him, as Israel were; and run away from him and hide ourselves, as Adam did; yea, but we have a merciful High Priest, that is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. As man he had experience of our afflictions. Are we sorrowful? so was he: "Sorrowful, even unto death." Are we grieved? he was "acquainted with grief." Are we in poverty? so was he. Are we smitten? so was he. Are we deserted? so was he; having a natural fitness to us, being bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh.

(3.) He must be a man in regard of justice. Justice required that the same nature that sinned should be punished for sin, and make satisfaction for sin. God said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Now die we must, either in our own persons, or in our Surety, in our own nature. If any angel had fulfilled the law, what had that been to us? If any angel had suffered God's wrath, what had that been to us, to man? Though God allowed the change or commutation of persons, yet not the commutation of natures; the same nature that sinned must suffer.

(4.) He must be a man in respect of the devil. The devil conquered man, and man must conquer the devil. Satan must be foiled by the same nature that foiled him. "The seed of the woman must bruise the head of the serpent." For this cause, therefore, the Son of God was manifested in our flesh, "that he might destroy the works of the devil."

(5.) He must be a man in regard of sin; which must be cured by the contrary antidote. Our sin was pride. (Gen. iii. 5.) Being but men, we desired to be gods; therefore the cure is by humility; wherefore God becomes man. Man broke the law, and man must keep the law. By our sin we transgressed the boundaries of God's law; Christ, therefore, is made of a woman, made under the law. Sin defaced the glory of God; therefore he who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, becomes of no reputation, and comes in the form of a servant. Sin is a

decide, striking at the being of God, seeking his life; therefore he that had a life equal with God's, laid down his life for the satisfaction of this wrong. "Awake, O sword, against the man that is my fellow."

(6.) He must be a man in regard of passability, or sufferings: "Without suffering, or shedding of blood, there is no remission." He that will save us, then, must die for us, and shed his blood for us, which he could not do had he been merely God, for "God is a Spirit." He becomes man, that he may be in case to enter the lists with justice; justice could not get at him with one stroke. But as soon as he was man, then, "Awake, O sword, against the man that is my Fellow, saith the Lord of hosts." But why could not the sword of justice awake against him till he was man? Why, as God, sin could not get hold of him, and so justice could not get a hit at him for sin, the law could not challenge him, the curse did not reach him; but whenever he becomes man, our Surety, then they all flee about him, and compass him about like bulls of Bashan. As he becomes man for us he becomes sin for us; and then he lay open to the curse, and justice took him by the throat; the sword awaked. When Christ saw the dreadful sword of wrath that was to be thrust through his heart, indeed it put the man to his knees: "Father, let this cup pass from me." The human nature trembled, and sweat great drops of blood in his proleptic, anticipatory, fore-running agony. However, the man was God as well as man, and therefore he wrestled through.

(To be continued.)

GOD FAITHFUL TO HIS PROMISES; BEING OUR ONLY REFUGE IN DARK AND TRYING TIMES, OR IN AFFLICTIVE PROVIDENCES.

By JOHN RUSK.

"Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."—Psalm xxxvii. 3.

I must acknowledge that I have undertaken a great work in attempting to explain this text, and so you would admit if you could enter into my feelings. I will tell you what set me at it. I have been lately much tried in providence, and much afraid of apostacy, taking an offence or stumbling at God's word. Under deep discoveries of my fearful state this morning, I was helped to confess to God, with some little satisfaction that he attended to me; and it was impressed on my mind, not hurriedly, but deliberately, to write something about trusting in the Lord. The words I have written as a text came to my mind, and I was a little comforted in my attempt to think upon them.

With this half a grain of faith, and a humble dependance on the most Holy Spirit, who alone can guide us into all truth, I will show you,

- I. What is *not* intended by "Trust in the Lord."
- II. Positively, what it is to "trust in the Lord."
- III. What it is to "do good."
- IV. The "land," and dwelling in it. And,
- V. The certainty of the promise being fulfilled, "Verily thou shalt be fed."

As all things are for our sakes, we will look at the text in two ways, spiritual and temporal.

I. *What is not intended by "Trust in the Lord."* 1. I think, then, it is not intended as a cant word, which will often come from people's mouths that have never been exercised in the fiery trial, or that have plenty of this world's goods. Such say we must trust in the Lord. As for instance, I knew a poor, tried, honest-hearted man that used to go to M—— Chapel, where also went a person of much prosperity, who knew the poor man's trials. He would often ask the poor man how he did, and the other would tell him. He would shake hands with the poor man and say, "Trust in the Lord." It may well be said, "They say, but do not." This is not trusting in the Lord, but in the abundance of riches. (Psalm lii. 7.) Bringing in the word trust to deceive the simple is as James expresses it, "They say, Be ye warned, and, Be ye filled," but do not part with anything to them. This is false trust.

2. I do not understand that trusting in the Lord means professing religion, however sound in doctrine, while my life, walk, and conversation contradict it. For instance, I profess to believe in the doctrine of election, the righteousness of Christ, the two natures of the Son of God, the new birth, the forgiveness of sins, justification by faith and the perseverance of the saints. Now, I say we may profess these things, and they are all true, but if our life contradict our profession, it is not trusting in the Lord. But Jeremiah tells you what it is: "Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord are these," (vii. 4,) and then steal, murder, and walk after other gods.

But say you, "What you have mentioned are not lying words." No; but if you are not elected, it is a lie to say you are. If Christ's righteousness is not upon you, it is a lie to say it is. And so in everything I have mentioned.

"Well, bless God," say you, "I escape it all, for I am sound in judgment and reformed in life, therefore I trust in the Lord." No, you do not.

"Let me hear you prove it," say you. So I can. Now you are sound in judgment, and Paul says that "knowledge shall vanish away." It is perishable, then. You are reformed in life. Then Satan has gone out, and you are swept and garnished, decorated with sound notions. Now the last state of such a soul is worse than the first. Therefore your trust is a false trust, for you are moved away from the hope of the gospel. But David says, "They

that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which never can be moved, but abideth for ever."

With respect to temporal supplies, we are not to understand, if we are poor, that we are to trust to the naked promise and despise lawful means. This is not trust, but presumption, and there is much pride in it. There is a deal of self in it too; aspiring too high, pretending to more faith than God's word speaks of, being wise above what is written, rushing into God's secret purposes, a stumbling at the word, perverting it and not taking the connexion of Scripture. Do you suppose a life of faith is a lazy, idle life? that you are to sit by the fireside and say, "I trust in the Lord; he is all-sufficient; he tells me to stand still?" No, no. This is a delusion of the devil, and all this self-sufficiency must come down. This is a false trust.

The trust named in our text is not a *partial* trust. For instance, you may have friends, property, a form of religion, and then bring in God in a partial way. Now, though you may acknowledge God, yet you will not do so fully till you are tried, and then you will see whether it is real. Job's three friends turned against him. His property was taken away; and as to religion, he says he had "heard with the hearing of the ear." This tried his trust; but it was proved real, for he says, "Though he slay me yet will I trust in him." But if you lean to friends, property, or formality, you are but partially trusting in God; and though you may think you are right at present, you will discover the cheat when God tries you. This is a false trust. Therefore the trust of a hypocrite that feels not for his brother in trouble; the sound notions of an Antinomian, of one who despises the means; as also a partial trusting, which may appear in a saint that has not been for some time exercised—all these may be called false trust, and that according to Scripture.

But say you, "What do the children of men trust in, seeing they do not trust in God?" According to Scripture, they trust in various things, as for instance, if a man has had good learning, come of a good family, been trained up in the externals of religion, been circumspect, and attended preaching, together with an outward walk which appears blameless, that man thinks himself righteous. He looks at others that are loose characters, and thinks, "Certainly I am not as these men." We read of some that "trusted in themselves that they were righteous." But they did not esteem others better than themselves. What then? Why, they "despised others." Now Paul had once plenty of this, and was not a little proud of it too. "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more." (Phil. iii. 4.)

There is another false trust, and it is thus expressed: "Though I am not so upright, just, honest, or religious as many, yet I have a good heart; I mean well, and am not without desires." Yes, but

do not you know that desires without diligence are nothing? Solomon says, "The slothful desireth, but hath nothing." And adds, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." Then this is a false trust.

And as it respects temporal things—taking every advantage, overreaching, defrauding, or turning away the stranger from his right, by not giving him his just due, nipping and squeezing, or grinding the face of the poor, this is devilish trust. "Trust ye not in oppression, and make not lies your refuge." You may be worth thousands of riches, and may build your nest on high, and may say with the fool, "Soul, take thine ease, for thou hast goods laid up for many years, eat, drink, and be merry." But God says, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee." Now this is also a false trust. But why? because riches make to themselves wings and fly away; therefore we are told not to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. In short, if we put anything in the place of God, it is a false trust, and will fail us sooner or later.

Thus I have shown what is not meant by trusting in God, and pointed out a few instances of false trust.

II. *What is it to trust in God?* or how shall we know whether we do trust in him or not? It may be asked, what is trust? I answer, faith. Suppose you are in real want of things that in value amount to five pounds; you go to your friend, and ask for his goods; when he has served you, he reckons it up and tells you it just comes to that sum. You reply, "I have no money; you must trust me." He says, "Very well, I believe you are honest, and will pay me when it suits you." But suppose, on the other hand, he has not that natural faith in you, why then he will say, "No; I don't believe you will pay me; I won't trust you." Now this is true literally.

Well, then, the first thing towards trust that you must have spiritually is faith, as Paul says, "I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Seeing, then, I have faith in some measure, what does my faith lay hold of? The spirituality of God's law. The law is applied, and that is called the ministration of death. Under the tuition of God's Spirit, it convinces me that I am dead to God: "We have the sentence of death (says Paul) in ourselves." What for? "That we should not trust in ourselves."

Now we want life—a life of faith here and a life of glory hereafter. But are we always sure of it? O no. We oftener doubt; but then as God is faithful we are obliged to trust him, "not (says Paul) as though we had already attained," or when called by grace were already perfect. Thus we sometimes conclude we certainly are quickened because we feel sin a burden. We feel a warfare within us. We are enlightened to discover our actual transgressions, and the unlimited demands of that holy law which we have broken. "We are altogether as an unclean thing," and have no righteousness but filthy

rags. But what would satisfy us? Why pardon, to be sure, through Christ's blood, life by his death, holiness by his Spirit, and his righteousness imputed to us; and we should wish never to doubt it more.

But recollect, "though we believe not (at all times) he abideth faithful;" therefore this calls for trust. Now here we may safely trust, for "God has sworn by his holiness that he will not lie unto David," that is, David in the figure, but Christ in reality. Or more properly, David in type, but Christ in truth.

Again. We are in a wicked, ensnaring, and inhospitable world, among them that would swallow us up. We feel our own weakness, and see how defenceless we are. What was Samson, that strong man, when the Lord withdrew? He was as weak as another man. See how they made sport of him, and put out his eyes. Now, seeing this is our case, how suitable is such a prayer as this: "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe." But not only have we enemies without, but we have far worse within. What powerful unbelief, notwithstanding the many tokens for good we have had! How slow of heart to believe! What enmity do we feel both against God and his family! What fears of taking an offence, stumbling at the word, and finally falling! And what keeps us up? Why now and then a little hope in the promise: "I will never leave thee, I will never, never, never forsake thee." Sometimes we have a little comfort: "I will send you another Comforter, that shall abide with you for ever." And we are at times enabled to look at the things that are not seen. We are caused to renew our strength, and to fight once more against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Well, then, have we trusted thus far for strength, and have we gone from strength to strength, (feeling weakness between each revival,) and as it is plain that as our days so our strength has been, then "Trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." This is trust.

It is said, "They that know thy (Covenant) name will put their trust in thee." But what is it to know this name? Four things will show.

1. He renews the soul by regeneration, in that he washes away its filthiness; and then produces by the blessed Spirit the fruits of righteousness. This is called knowing him, through his being merciful to our unrighteousnesses, and remembering our sins no more. And never was there such a meeting as that of a poor, vile wretch, like the publican, and a tender-hearted Saviour, a poor prodigal and a kind and loving father. I feel my heart a little warm while I write, considering my many slips, falls, and backslidings; and to think God is as faithful as ever! Then, are we gone out of the way? or are we under the hidings of his face? has a cloud come between us and him? Let us not be discouraged: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord and obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh

in darkness, and hath no (comfortable) light. Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay himself on his God."

2. This name is known by the Lord's coming and going. When he comes, it is "Peace be unto you!" and when he goes, all is gone that is worth having, as Hezekiah says, "For my peace I had great bitterness." But then the Lord left him as to a comfortable enjoyment of his presence, that he might know all that was in his heart. Well, Hezekiah, you must trust on: "Commit your way to him, trust also, and he will bring it to pass." So to prayer the king goes, and after this comes the answer: "I have heard his prayers, and seen his tears." Then Hezekiah breaks out, "The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day!"

3. By the spirit of adoption is this name known. As Paul says, "He hath sprinkled our hearts from an evil conscience;" and therefore "my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Ghost." This is having power to lay that claim, which is done by removing sin, Satan, unbelief, and hardness of heart, and giving us access by the power of grace reigning over sin. Christ in us, the hope of glory; victory over Satan; strong faith to cry "My Father" over unbelief; and remarkable meekness, humility, and godly sorrow over our native hardness; all which is taking away the heart of stone, and giving us a heart of flesh.

4. His name is known also by the shedding abroad of the love of our heavenly Father in our hearts. This casts out that slavish fear to which we are so prone. Now you may have felt this love again and again, and afterwards lost the enjoyment of it. But do you not find God's anger get more and more out of sight every time you feel it; and whilst it lasts, are you not delivered from slavish fear? And, though you may not enjoy it afterwards in so high degree, do you view him now as you once did—as a sin-avenging God? "No," say you, "unless under some particular temptation, I cannot say I do. But when the devil comes in in a hurry, he casts me into a fit of unbelief, and then I think all is wrong." Ah! these are sudden fears which we are told not to fear, and these are evil tidings which will soon blow away, when our heart will be fixed, trusting in the Lord.

(To be continued.)

A LETTER OF RUTHERFORD'S.

Well beloved Brother,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you!

Upon acquaintance in Christ, I thought good to take the opportunity of writing to you. Seeing it hath seemed good to the Lord of the harvest to take the hooks out of our hands for a time, and to lay upon us a more honourable service, even to suffer for his name, it were good to comfort one another in writing. I have had

a desire to see you in the face; yet now, being the prisoner of Christ, it is taken away.

I am greatly comforted to hear of your soldier's stately spirit for your princely and royal Captain, Jesus our Lord, and of the grace of God in the rest of our dear brethren with you. You have heard of my trouble, I suppose. It hath pleased our sweet Lord Jesus to let loose the interdicted lords in his house, to deprive me of my ministry at Anwoth, and to confine me eightscore miles from thence to Aberdeen; and also (which was not done to any before) to inhibit me to speak at all in Jesus his name within this kingdom, under the pain of rebellion. The cause that ripened their hatred was my book against the Arminians, whereof they accused me those three days I appeared before them; but let our crowned King in Zion reign; by his grace the loss is theirs, the advantage is Christ's and truth's. Albeit this honest cross gained some ground on me by heaviness, and inward challenges of conscience for a time were sharp; yet now, for the encouragement of you all, I dare say it, and write it under my hand, Welcome, welcome, sweet, sweet cross of Christ! I verily think the chains of my Lord Jesus are all overlaid with pure gold, and that his cross is perfumed, and that it smelleth of Christ; and that the victory shall be by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of his truth; and that Christ lying on his back, in his weak servants and oppressed truth, shall ride over his enemies' bellies, and shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.

It is time to laugh when he laugheth; and, seeing he is now pleased to sit with wrongs for a time, it becometh us to be silent, until the Lord hath let the enemies enjoy their hungry, lean, and feckless* paradise. Blessed are they who are content to take strokes with a weeping Christ. Faith will trust the Lord, and is not hasty nor headstrong; neither is faith so timorous as to flatter a tentation, or to bud and bribe the cross. It is little up or little down that the Lamb and his followers can get no law-surety, nor truce with crosses. It must be so, till we be up in our Father's house. My heart is woe indeed for my mother-church, that hath played the harlot with many lovers; for her Husband hath a mind to sell her for her horrible transgressions, and heavy will be the hand of the Lord upon this backsliding nation. The ways of our Zion mourn; her gold is become dim, her white Nazarites are black like a coal. How shall not the children weep, when the Husband and the mother cannot agree? Yet I believe Scotland's skies shall clear again, and that Christ shall build again the old waste places of Jacob, and that our dead and dry bones shall become an army of living men; and that our Wellbeloved may feed among the lilies, until the day break, and the shadows flee away.

My dear brother, let us help one another with our prayers. Our King shall mow down his enemies, and shall come from Bozrah with his garments all dyed in blood; and for our consolation shall he appear, and call his wife Hephzibah, and his land Beulah. For he will rejoice over us and marry us, and Scotland shall say,

* Spiritless, feeble, weak.

"What have I to do any more with idols?" Strokes with the sweet Mediator's hand are very sweet; he has always been sweet to my soul, but since I suffered for him his breath has a sweeter smell than before. O that every hair of my head, and every member, and every bone in my body, were a man to witness a fair confession for him. I would think all too little for him.

When I look over beyond the line, and beyond death, to the laughing side of the world, I triumph, and ride upon the high places of Jacob. Howbeit otherwise I am a faint, dead-hearted, cowardly man, oft borne down, and hungry in waiting for the marriage-supper of the Lamb. Nevertheless, I think it the Lord's wise love that feeds us with hunger, and makes us fat with wants and desertions.

I know not, my dear brother, if our worthy brethren be gone to sea or not. They are on my heart, and in my prayers. If they be yet with you, salute my dear friend John Stuart, my wellbeloved brethren in the Lord, Mr. Blair, Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Livingston, and Mr. McClellan, and acquaint them with my troubles, and entreat them to pray for the poor afflicted prisoner of Christ; they are dear to my soul. I seek your prayers and theirs for my flock; their remembrance breaks my heart. I desire to love that people, and others, my dear acquaintance in Christ, with love in God, and as God loveth them. I know that He who sent me to the west and south sends me also to the north. I will charge my soul to believe and to wait for him, and will follow his providence, and not go before it nor stay behind it.

Now, my dear brother, taking farewell in paper, I commend you all to the word of his grace, and to the work of his Spirit, to him who holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, that you may be kept spotless till the day of Jesus our Lord. I am,

Your brother in affliction, in our sweet Lord Jesus,

From Irving, being on my journey to Christ's palace in Aberdeen, August 4, 1636. SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

THE BLOOD AND RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST.

How I have felt my soul delighted with the blood and righteousness of Christ! not with the notion and head knowledge of them, as many; not with the distant sight and acknowledgment of them, as Balaam; but with the close feeling sensibly of them.

O! I have felt my sin and destitution to be met by the blood and righteousness of Christ; and what was the effect?—my sin vanished, and my nakedness of soul vanished. And unutterable beauty and a whole world of charms have spiritually come in their place. Then that scripture bloomed: "To the praise of the glory of his grace." Dazzled with the beauty of putting on Christ sensibly, overcome with the dress of his blood and righteousness, as my wedding-dress or marriage garment, I have said, "Where am I?" Then I felt my soul as naturally to fall to Christ as lead falls to the ground. Then I felt

the sweetness of that scripture, "Ye are not your own." "No, Lord," said I, "I am dazzled and afraid of looking at myself." And, dressed in the wedding garment of Christ's active and passive righteousness, the beauty of the soul then is such that it is overpowering. At least, I have found it so. "O! take me, Lord," said I, "for I cannot bear to look on myself; the glittering grandeur and beauty of thy blood and righteousness on me overpowers me: see, my soul! darest thou look on thyself? O! I swoon, I faint." "To be admired for ever in all them that believe," then was felt. Innocency, truth, wisdom, a single eye, divine honesty, and all manner of excellencies beamed on my soul as being part of the communicable divine nature." "O! where am I?" said I, "it must be heaven, and it is heaven." And let me tell you, when the blood and righteousness of Christ are accompanied, (as they are in the elect,) with the power of the Holy Ghost, it is heaven absolutely in measure. And I doubt not but the kingdom of glory is merely an enlargement infinitely, as God sees fit, of these surprising joys.

The Holy Ghost, the seven spirits of God, is inseparably annexed to Christ's blood and righteousness, and to nowhere else. (Gal. iii. 2.) Startle at that, ye Arminians, ye self-righteous. When these seven spirits (that cloven tongue of fire) rest on a soul, and reveal there Christ's blood and righteousness, what surprising effects! Oh! the startling glory! the sweet effects! the wonderful presence of Christ felt! the beauty, the glory, the sweetness! Heirs of another creation! Such souls become bewildered with delight; yea, even the bitter operations of this Testifier of Christ become even sweet in a sense; as it is written, "We glory in tribulations, and take pleasure in distresses." Soul! hast thou received the Holy Ghost? if not, all thy knowledge of Christ is mere Scripture without the power. If thou hast received the Holy Ghost, he will dig into those heavenly mines, the Scriptures, for thee; he will open streams in the desert for thee. Scriptural knowledge under his divine influences will breathe. Then, thou wilt know somewhat of Him that garnished the heavens testifying to thee of Christ. Enwrapt in beauty, grandeur, and wonder, thou wilt see the blood of Christ and his preceptive obedience to the law to be worth ten thousand worlds, and infinitely more. Confined to the elect, and being absolutely efficacious, the blood and righteousness of Christ thus assumes ten thousand beauties; and when thou seest thyself to be one of the elect,—wonder-struck, thou hearest the Holy Ghost, that garnished the heavens with inimitable beauty, say to thy soul, "Sinner! this is thine; the blood and righteousness of the Second Person in the Trinity incarnate! Will not this do? See thy sins vanish under his blood, and thy destitute nakedness enrobed in his positive deeds, all wrought out for thee; made over to thee as thy own by imputation from God to thee! Will not this do?" Then the soul, fainting with rapture, gratitude, and a strange compound of feelings, says, "But is it true? can it be true?" "Yes," says the Testifier of Jesus. And with that gradually, and more or less, faith baffles, through the Spirit's power, unbelief. And a whole

train of consequences, more or less, begin to arise *in* the soul. Godly fear, sweet peace, happy hope, comfortable joy, begin to spread their wings, and scatter away misery, woe, and sorrow. As we read, "Healing in his wings." And no tongue can tell all that follows. Gospel obedience will begin to bud. Tenderness of conscience will begin to shine. The indwelling of Christ's Spirit will begin to be felt. Happy sensations as to future bliss will begin to be felt. The poverty and suspicious happiness arising from creatures will begin to be felt. The superiority of the happiness arising from God in Christ will begin to be felt. The sweetness of God in Christ will begin to be felt. These, and a thousand nameless sweets will begin to spread their mild tranquillity through the soul. Now you will begin to call yourself a thousand fools for having been cheated so with earthly things, to think of making happiness out of them which are part of the bondage of corruption, and, in a sense, so under God's curse. Now, you will see that the world is fallen, and that your first-Adam nature is in that fall. Now, you will begin to see and feel that there is a certain feverishness in terrestrialism, of whatever sort it is. Now, as Hart says, you will thus see this feverishness,

" This lurking leaven ferments the mass ;
All nature's sick ; creation's spoil'd."

Now you will see what fools all men are, as Solomon's Proverbs show, building for happiness beneath the skies. Now you will see this world is a pro-tempore building, hastily run up to be pulled down again; that God has made terrestrial things of a feeble texture; that God intends to burn up the world; that this world is not our rest; that through the fall it is polluted thoroughly. Crucifixion to the world and the world unto you, and crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts, begin to be and shine as something desirable. Now to "touch a dead body and be unclean," is antitypically fulfilled to you in a thousand different ways. You can scarcely think, speak, act, or look, &c., but you contract guilt. All is death, vanity, and vexation out of Christ. Now, hearkening through grace to Christ's Spirit who "leads" you is your glory. He tells you, "Love not the things that are in the world; die daily." Which, says the worldling, is no doubt the essence of melancholy. It is not so. Partaker of a better creation in Christ through his blood and righteousness, you are new-created in Him thus. You begin to taste the nature of the new creation in Christ; and you gradually begin to say, "What intolerable deformity! what poor empty work! what an unsatisfying want of solidity there is in this world I am now living in! I would not live always. I suffer the most from my own heart, wherein is the cruel and incurable poison of asps." You become weaned from the world. One touch of carnality in you brings up a whole troop of things friendly to the devil. You see the flesh is corrupt. All things decay, wax old, and are ready to vanish away.

Now you turn your mind to the last scene of Christ, as your Resur-

rection; when redemption will wave its last and final flag of immeasurable triumph over every foe. I mean the last general resurrection of all the celestial bodies of saints. Now, when God has turned the world into a ruin, and swept it with the besom of destruction, "Now," say you, "interested in the blood and righteousness of the great Redeemer, I, with the spirits of all justified men made complete,—now we shall be clothed upon with our heavenly houses, our bodies of glory." Say you again, what intolerable imperfection our present stay on earth is much and oft! Interested in the blood and righteousness of the great Redeemer, and with his sweet Spirit indwelling in me, turning all my soul by springs of fear and love into somewhat like a healthy garden, you say, "How happy I am!"

Watching the hand of God, waiting on him, hearkening to him, you must be builded together, by the Spirit, in Christ by the predestinated method, sorrow and joy. You must not pick and choose. You must say in a gospel sense,

"Whatever is, is right."

Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. Have no communion so far with men who profess they can grow in Christ without the Spirit's influences sensibly enabling. Take heed what thou hearest. And may the blood and righteousness thou hast had from necessity to trust to, shine more and more to thee, till thy whole soul created therein (in this blood and righteousness) cries out, "I know that all that the Scriptures speak of the blood and righteousness of Christ is true. For I have got the springs of happiness arising therefrom in my own soul, and which I believe will arise there to a never-ending eternity, as sure as there is a God."

Abingdon.

I. K.

AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER BY THE LATE
W. HUNTINGTON.—No. III.

My dear Brother in Christ Jesus,—Grace, mercy, and peace be with thee!

I have been for many days most sorely tried at the views I have of a famine, the long and tedious war, my own indisposition, and no one raised up to succeed me. The thoughts of leaving a family without a father, and a flock without a shepherd, have sorely tried me. I have long laboured hard in prayer against this inclement weather; and last Monday shut myself up in the chapel the whole day to entreat the Lord for this, but I see no answer granted, therefore conclude it is determined, though I must confess he gave me much freedom and energy with him. I have seemed as if the care and government of both world and church were upon my shoulders; and when I have heard fools talk of a multitude of gospel ministers and of God's cause flourishing, it has made me almost mad. The

devil has had such access to me, and such power over my corruptions, that he has made me feel every sensation peculiar to his dark abode, except the sting of death, the curse of the law, and the unappeased wrath of God. He came to me in great wrath indeed, and he found plenty of allies in me—rebellion, enmity, revenge, hard thoughts, perverseness, hardness of heart, unbelief, stubbornness, obstinacy, self-will, and desperation. Well might Paul say, "In my flesh dwelleth no good thing:" it is "a den of dragons;" and wonderful it is that grace and corruption should dwell so close to each other, and more wonderful still that the devil should find such access to a heart in which I know the Holy Ghost is often felt sensibly to dwell.

Yesterday I began to lift up my head, and once more rejoice in spirit. The devil is departed for a short season, and all his allies are couched in their dens until their prime leader gives them another alarm for war. What surprises me most is, that the Lord should deign to visit me in so unresenting a manner; but he knows we cannot expel these cursed inhabitants, though we are always at war with them.

My bad disorder is much abated, and my strength is returning to me again. My youth is renewed like the eagle's, now this moulting time begins to be over with me. O! how dead have I been to this world, under this sore, this fiery trial. How dreadfully wicked and rebellious is the human heart, and how sorely will God discover it, and how severely does he exercise it, and what an almighty thing is faith in Him, which will hold him by the love of his heart, while the soul, under Satan, boils with malice at him for his sharp dealings.

I call him my own God even when I think the devil and I are in league against him. How stable is his covenant, how sure his promise, and his Spirit's witness, and many immutable things. We need much power and a rare anchor to hold us in such tremendous storms as my soul has waded through; but it is "by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit;" for when in the worst of troubles he is a present help, and as our days of trial are, so shall our strength be, for his power is made perfect in weakness. From the first hour God began his work on me to the present time, have I been tempted more or less of the devil. His first work was to sink me in despair, but when my deliverance was wrought, and God left me to try me, then he called all the work in question. Not a promise did God give me, nor token for good did he show me, not an answer granted to my prayers but what the devil would interfere with; but now his principal work is to set me to rebel and murmur at the calamitous times that appear before me; but the time will come when there shall be a stop to this war. Meantime war with the old man and Satan is better than peace, for we must be more than conquerors through Him that loves us.

He has overcome, and the victory is surely ours. And as the path of tribulation is the way to the kingdom, this path is better than ease; for after every battle is ended, I do find, more or less,

that I come forth in the power of the Spirit; and they that have no changes fear not God. God's choice of us and the furnace of affliction go together.

Dear Brother, adieu! Grace and peace be with thee and with thy spouse!

Yours to serve in the Lord Jesus,

W. HUNTINGTON, S. S.

AM I A GOD AT HAND AND NOT A GOD AFAR OFF?

My dear Friend and Helper in the Lord,—Your long and welcome epistle came safe to hand, the contents of which gave me both pain and pleasure.

I am truly glad to find, that amid all your trials you are enabled to look to the Rock for shelter from the storm, and not only to look there, but find the Lord “a very present help in trouble.”

“’Tis not on beds of ease,
But in a thorny road,
We prove the promise *all of grace*,
And God a faithful God.”

There are moments when I am enabled to rejoice, that “Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.” And we who know by feeling that we are sinners can rejoice only in that salvation which was planned by the Father of mercies, and completely accomplished by the love and blood of Jesus.

The great bulk of professors are delighted with the work of their own hands, and are saying, “We thank God that we are not as other men.” Indeed, they are not! “They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men.” They have no “changes;” they have “no bands in their death;” but their strength is firm; their eyes stand out with fatness, they have more than heart could wish. What a mercy to be delivered from a delusion so awful as theirs! And, truly, the family beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be delivered from every false way, and from every evil thing; for thus saith the Lord, “They shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a Saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them.”

It often happens, that when we think of giving up all for lost, the mighty Lord of life and glory appears for us, as our shield and buckler, our high tower, and strong deliverer. When these special deliverances are wrought for us, it makes the Person, blood, and righteousness of the Lord Jesus more precious to our souls and more lovely in our eyes. This appears to have been the case with the church in old times, when she said, “My Beloved is the chiefest among ten thousand.” Yes, *he* is the chiefest and first of all! because there is none that can support under trouble, or deliver from it but himself! None can give ease, peace, or life, but *he* who conquered death by dying. And, though our life often seems nought but mystery, disorder, and confusion, still, it is the

life of the gospel, the life of the promise, the life of the covenant, the life of the Spirit, the life of Jesus, the life of God! This is a never-dying life. It is hid with Christ in God. "And when he who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory." There is not any thing that can get at this life, so as to hurt or destroy it. The world, the flesh, and the devil have tried their worst, but all in vain. "I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Jesus Christ hath put away sin, and thereby destroyed death: and him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and is made manifest to be the deliverer of the whole election of grace.

All these highly favoured souls were sanctified by God the Father, in his purpose of covenant love and mercy, preserved in Jesus Christ, washed in his blood, and clothed with his righteousness, and are upheld by his power, guided by his wisdom, and encouraged by his word of promise. They are taught by his Holy Spirit to feel their lost condition, made to call on the name of the Lord, brought out of the world and from the world's religion, which in fact is nought but a refuge of lies, and enabled to escape for their life, by fleeing to Christ, the City of Refuge, from the *avenger of blood*, the just claims of a broken law.

Oh! my dear friend, how sweet and precious are those moments when the Prince of Peace shows himself, or speaks in any way to the poor panting soul, panting as the hart for the water brooks! He does not always apply the same word to each, though all have a word applied; and whenever he speaks, the word suits the case, and the soul is either delivered or relieved. If delivered, nothing more is wanted; if relieved, it is a token for good that the deliverance will come in due time.

How necessary is trouble, though our nature does not like it! I remember, in the month of November, 1840, I was in a very great strait indeed. My wife was travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. At the time I had no money, no friend, no credit, and neither food nor fuel in the house. She looked at me and said, "What shall we do?" My reply was, "I don't know." I went out to a lonely place about a mile from home, where I tried to lay my case before the Lord, with many sighs, and cries, and groans. I felt for some time access to God. I returned home; some man had left a parcel containing such things as were very acceptable indeed on that occasion, and almost directly another parcel was brought containing two pieces of gold. Both were from a far country, and whence I did not expect them. The persons who attended my wife on that occasion knew nothing of the matter, any more than the lad knew the secret between David and his friend. I am sure that "they that observe these things shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord." I could name several more things of a like kind, but the one above is sufficient to exemplify a most blessed word of truth, "Am I a God at hand, and not afar off?" saith the Lord. Blessed be his name! he is at hand to help, and afar off to

raise up helpers. I am a witness of this in very many instances. Poverty has not only looked me in the face, but has many times entered into my dwelling. I have suffered a great deal, as you will be aware, when I tell you that we have had twelve children, nine of whom are now living.

I have suffered affliction both in my own person and in my family; but these afflictions are light compared with a wounded spirit. Soul distress outweighs all other afflictions. I have learned this by dearly bought experience. And that man who sets himself up as a teacher, not knowing these things, will never be able to meet the cases of the Lord's poor children, nor does he understand the secrets of truth. Blessed be our God! in the midst of my great and sore trials these many years in the wilderness, he has appeared for my help, relieved my wants, healed my sicknesses, chased my foes, and brought peace to my throbbing heart. He has been my sheltering Rock "when the blast of the terrible one has beaten as a storm against the wall." And surely we may be encouraged to hope that He who hath delivered will yet deliver us from all evil.

One of the greatest evils from which the Lord Jesus delivers his poor people is *themselves*, by disclosing the secrets of their hearts, which are said to be "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." And until men are made acquainted with themselves as being lost, helpless, guilty, filthy, worthless creatures, they will not have even a desire to look to the Rock for shelter, or to the Sun for light. But when it pleases the Lord to open the heart, as he did Lydia's, the case is known and felt,—desires, sighs, cries, sobs, and groans flow from the soul to the Lord: "Deliver me from evil;" or, "O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul!"

We know, (I hope we do,) by blessed experience, that cries thus wrung from the heart are not disregarded: "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain." No! blessed be his dear name, he has never yet done so, but he has said, "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him." O how sin, in all its hateful names and shapes, puffs at the poor child of God! and so do the devil, the world, and especially professors of religion; but the Lord says, "I will set him in safety." Noah was safe in the ark; the Church is safe in Christ: "And he hath made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Nor can any pluck out of his hand: "All thy saints are in his hand." O how safe are the objects of the Father's love, the purchase of the blood of Jesus, the temple of the Holy Spirit! If they were of the world, they would often be at ease, but not in safety. "The people shall dwell in safety alone." They are chosen out of the world, and separated from it, and it is on this account that the world hates them, as it did and does the Lord of the house. It is folly to expect ease or rest here: "This is not our rest, it is polluted." This is a strange land, and we are strangers and pilgrims in it, little known and as little beloved. But you know

as well as I do, that the gale, however dreaded by the seaman, often helps the vessel homeward. The vessels of mercy may be driven leagues from the point *they* intended, but depend upon it, it is for some good purpose: "All things work together for good to them that love God." We may rest assured that none of the flock ever were or ever will be finally

"Led, or driven, only where
They best and safest may abide."

I would not say to my beloved brother in the midst of his trials, "Cheer up," but would rather say, "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." Should it please the Lord to vouchsafe these blessings to my dear friend, it will be what the world with all its wealth and honour can never give or take away. The world, the flesh, and the devil will try to rob us of our jewels, but they will try in vain. Fears and doubts, lust and pride, darkness of mind, hardness of heart, coldness of affection, fawning foes, and, what is painful indeed, false brethren join the troops to plunder and rob us of our portion, but all shall fail of their enterprise: "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper." No, blessed be our God! He holds the reins in his own hand, overrules every evil for good, turns the curse of our enemies into a blessing, helps us to gain ground by every fall, leads us to feel the need of faith through the working of tormenting fear, gives us to see the need of Christ's blood to cleanse us from guilt felt upon the conscience, and also his righteousness to hide our wickedness and shame. In short, there is an unbounded fulness in the Lord Jesus Christ, exactly suited to all our wants. It meets every pure desire raised up in the soul by the operations of the Holy Spirit, so that all the redeemed shall sooner or later join the church of old in singing, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."

It appears by your epistle that you often sink under gloomy doubts and fearful apprehensions, as regards success in the work whereunto the Lord hath called you; on which account you think little of yourself. So much the better; the Lord hath not despised the "day of small things." Spiritual prosperity is not at all times what we think. Neither our littleness nor our greatness has anything to do with these matters: "It is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Has the Lord ever failed you during these many years that you have been in the wilderness? "Not one thing hath failed you of all the good things which the Lord your God promised you." No, not one! "Take no thought for the morrow. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." This advice was given by the Best Friend the church ever saw! He loves at all times. May his Spirit and presence ever be with you!

I should be glad to hear that the Lord has opened up a way for you. Let me have a line from you when it suits your convenience, and do not let our correspondence be broken off till death removes one of us.

Give my kindest regards to your dear spouse, and accept the same yourself from,

Yours sincerely in Christian love and affection,

R. M.

A PETITION.

Dear Sirs,—I have for several years been a constant reader of the *Gospel Standard*, and a lover of the truth as it is there set forth.

I have been in the neighbourhood of Chalford for more than two years, crawling over the hills to find the truth, where I could make my home. To my pleasure and surprise I have found, I believe, a few of the dear Lord's poor sheep at a place called Painswick, in Gloucestershire.

I should feel it a great pleasure if you would speak a word to any of the ministers of truth, to ask them if they will be so kind as to give the little flock at Painswick a call, that they with the rest of the fold may be favoured in their turn with a little of the good old wine of the kingdom.

They appear to be a poor despised few, almost unknown to the church of truth, and I believe altogether cast out by the world and the professors of the day.

I remain, dear sirs,

Yours in the love of the everlasting truth,

Chalford, August, 1847.

H. B.

INQUIRY.

Messrs. Editors,—A Constant Reader of the *Gospel Standard* will feel obliged if you will answer the following question:—Is it consistent for one that professes the doctrines advocated in the *Gospel Standard* to join with a family in their forms of worship, morning and evening, who are members of the Church of England? The person for whom I ask is a servant in the family.

Yours respectfully,

Bath, Sep. 23, 1847.

AN INQUIRER.

[If the person be a partaker of grace, we should say, No. It is not consistent to join with dead professors of religion in dead forms of prayer or worship. If there be divine life in the soul, such forms would bring it into bondage and death; and besides, all printed forms of prayer are unscriptural, and an insult to true, heart-felt, spiritual prayer, and a mockery of the Spirit's work in giving a spirit of grace and supplication.—Eds.]

POETRY.

THE SOUL IN SORROW.

What tongue can tell, what pen pourtray,
The anguish of my wounded mind?
Absorb'd in grief and sad dismay,
What cheering refuge can I find?

My faith, once lively, active, clear,
Presented Jesus to my view,
As always ready, always near,
My drooping spirits to renew.

But now the hour of trial 's come;
I faint, I sink, beneath my foes,
And faithless wide from Jesus roam,
While guilty shame my heart o'erflows.

No longer does transporting joy,
Arising from the Saviour's love,
My grateful, quivering lips employ,
Or raise my soul to things above.

No more the smiles of heaven-born peace
Are found within my breast to spring;
But awful gloom does still increase
And sadly pains me while I sing.

And must I always thus complain?
No more the taste of bliss enjoy?
Will heaven my grief and suit disdain,
And always let my foes annoy?

Thou may'st, all-righteous God, I know,
My suit, my grief,—my all despise;
Thou justly may'st add blow to blow,
Nor heed my groans and streaming eyes.

But oh! that mercy call to mind
Which oft to me thou didst extend;
As thou wert then, be ever kind,
And let thy pitying love descend.

Regard thy glorious pleading Son,
Who shed his precious blood for me;
Let him thy love and grace bring down,
And set my troubled spirit free.

My wandering heart restore, renew,
Its guilt and frailties all forgive;
And let me still thy paths pursue,
And in thy kingdom ever live.

MARA.

When I have spoken of Christ till my head rive, I have said just nothing, I may begin again. A Godhead, a Godhead is a world's wonder! Set ten thousand thousand new made worlds of angels and elect men, and double them in number ten thousand, thousand, thousand times; let their heart and tongues be ten thousand thousand times more agile and large than the heart and tongues of the seraphims, that stand with six wings before him, (Isa. vi. 2,) when they have said all for the glorifying and praising of the Lord Jesus, they have but spoken little or nothing! His love will bide all possible creatures to praise!—*Lutherford.*

THE

GOSPEL STANDARD.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.”—Matt. v. 6.

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”—2 Tim. i. 9.

“The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.”—Rom. xi. 7.

“If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”—Acts vii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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GOD FAITHFUL TO HIS PROMISES; BEING OUR
ONLY REFUGE IN DARK AND TRYING TIMES, OR
IN AFFLICTIVE PROVIDENCES.

BY JOHN RUSK.

(Continued from page 20.)

But the question is, Do we know this name? for if we do, we shall put our trust in him; and if we know it, what shall we trust in him for, seeing we have already got this name? Did you never read in Psalm xxii., where David, speaking as Christ, says, “I will declare thy name to my brethren;” and in John xvii., Christ says, “I have declared thy name, and will declare it?” It is this declaring of it, or, in other words, multiplied pardons, that we are to trust in the Lord for, that we may never rest till we find access by his blood, trusting in him to heal our backslidings, to receive us graciously, and to love us freely, that, as we have received Christ Jesus the Lord, we may walk in him. This is trust.

Furthermore, we are to trust in the Lord for righteousness and judgment. 1. As it respects *the righteousness of Christ*. If you ask what this righteousness is, I answer, It is Christ’s obedience to every law that God commanded, and that we have broken. Therefore he said, “It becometh us to fulfil all righteousness;” not for himself, but for us; for he never broke one command. He therefore said, “I restored that which I took not away.” Here he could defy the devil: “The prince of this world cometh, but hath nothing in me;” and in another place the devils called him the

Holy One of God. To the Pharisees he said, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" Pilate was forced to call him a just person. But all this would have been of no service to us had he been nothing but a good man; for "none of them can redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." But here lies our everlasting happiness: "This is the name whereby he shall be called, JEHOVAH, *our righteousness.*"

Now, it is said in Psalm xxxvii., "Trust in him, and he will bring forth thy righteousness as the light." "This is very good," say you, "but I have now waited long in expectation that I should get this righteousness, and I seem as far off as ever." Yes, but before you complain, how long did the Lord bear with you in a state of nature? How long did you go on treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath? And now you begin to seek him, you want the greatest blessing that ever was given to the children of men to be given to you directly! No, God will let you seek long, wait long, hunger long, thirst long, and you shall entreat him again and again. In this way he will bring your spirit down to trust him for the accomplishment of his promise; and he will make you thankful for very little, instead of murmuring that you have not got much. Besides, do you know that he "justifieth the ungodly?" and it is in this long, deliberate way, that he often deals with us, to bring us to see and feel our ungodliness. And depend upon it, he will be as good as his word: "Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Hath he spoken, and shall he not bring it to pass?" This calls for trust, as Hart says:

"Trust in him, he will not deceive us."

But you may say, "Some that have not been half so long seeking as I have, can boast of this righteousness." That may be the case; but remember God is a sovereign, and it will be well for you if you have it at all. Remember you have no demand upon God; righteousness is a free gift. Suppose he had let you remain either a careless sinner or a self-righteous one, you could not have helped yourself. May these considerations bring you down, and teach you to submit. Consider what this righteousness is. It is the righteousness of the God-man. Oh! should you and I be found in this in the great day, we shall not be grieved that we had so much trouble in seeking it. No! Besides, all this hurry does not further it; for God resists the proud, and the rebellious dwell in a dry land. It is in this way he brings us in debtors to him, and lays us under everlasting obligations; and when we appear in our own eyes fit fuel for Satan, he places this to our account, as he did to Joshua the high priest, and then says, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" and then sends the blessed Spirit to bear witness in our consciences, as you read: "Abel obtained witness that he was righteous."

"Well," say you, "if I could get this, there would be an end to this part of my trust." Do you think so? Then you are greatly mistaken; for you would often find your old accusers. Remember,

we are still in the body. Satan is not dead. The old man is not dead. We are not out of the reach of professing people, that are our enemies as well as worldlings. And if the Lord is pleased to hide his face and leave us for a time in their hands, it is not the brightest saint that could stand here. No! He would find the great faith that he once had was now the little faith; and though he might have a keen appetite (having life) after righteousness, yet he must trust God then to fill him with the fruits of righteousness. It is one thing to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and another thing to say, "I am full and abound." Now, this is trust.

Again, if you take righteousness to mean uprightness between man and man, as David says, "The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness;" this also would call for trust. For if you are blessed with a tender conscience and with the fear of the Lord, it would try you not a little to find that the more this went on, the more God seemed to walk contrary; that the more there was of this, the more Providence would frown; and that not for a week, a month, or a year, but sometimes for years: "His way is in the sea, his path in deep waters, and his footsteps are not known." And should you know hunger, cold, and nakedness, as Paul did, and at the same time see the worst creatures living rolling in wealth, while you wanted a shilling to buy a loaf, and greatly in debt besides, how here to our blind reason the promise runs one way and providence runs another; but "judgment shall return to righteousness, and all the upright in heart are to follow it." This puzzled Asaph, Jeremiah, and many others; and it calls for trust.

2. As it respects *judgment*. This judgment was fully executed on our Surety, for "he was taken from prison and from judgment." "Smite the Shepherd!" "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd!"

Now, here, as considered in him, we have a full discharge. But knowing as yet nothing of this, he brings us, as Job says, into judgment with him; or, as Peter says, judgment begins at the house of God; the law is brought home and we are found guilty. Here we cannot tell in what all this will terminate. We are sensible of our wretched state as sinners; but as we read that fearfulness surprises the hypocrite, and we are sensible of the deceitfulness of our hearts, we think we certainly are hypocrites, for we are so confused and hurried, and our judgment so broken, that we do not know what will become of us; but here we must still trust; for the Scripture says, "Trust in him, and he will make our judgment as the noonday."

It is judgment also with us when hearing the word preached, as you read thus by Paul: "Such a one is judged of all." His life is laid open, his sins stare him in the face, and the guilt of them pierces his conscience. He sometimes is ready to run away; but the consideration of hating the light terrifies him, and sometimes he thinks, who knows but this may be in God's time for my good? and then he leans that way and can trust him for a while. But as these times come seldom, he sinks again, and every thing peculiar to the wicked or reprobate he applies to himself. Satan, finding

him sinking, (he having cast away what little confidence he had,) comes in and suggests to him that "the wicked shall not stand in the judgment." And as the man feels enmity against God and his family, such texts as these will come into his mind: "The Lord will not be slack to him that hateth him; he will repay him to his face." "They that hate Zion shall be desolate."

Add to this the hardness of his heart. "Ah!" says Satan, "you are like Pharaoh;" and his blindness of mind, Satan has a text also for that: "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not." "Can any one," he adds, "be more haters of the light, of God, and his people—more hardened against him, blind, and confused, than you? And if you pray," says Satan, "you do not pray with earnestness or with weight, neither is your heart in it. You confess, but you do not forsake sin; no, your besetting sins hold you down, and God's word says, 'The wicked shall be holden with the cords of his sin, and die without instruction.' Where is there a bigger fool than you are? And as for such prayers, they are abomination to the Lord; for it is only the prayer of the upright that is God's delight. You know the upright love him; but you find enmity, and as deeper trials will come in time, you will take an offence and hate him and his family—for you know that 'he turns their heart to hate his people.'" Now all these things I have found in my experience; and when under the trial, I really thought it was God that brought these terrible texts. I believe it is intended to be so, to make the case of the person more dreadful. We know how Satan followed hard upon Job with one trial on the back of another; but Job does not say, "Satan hath taken away," but "The Lord hath taken away."

Now this is a trying path to walk in, and calls for trust, as David says: "Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood on the earth; but mine eyes are unto thee, O God the Lord; in thee is my trust; leave not my soul destitute." (Psalm cxli. 7, 8.)

But there is another sort of judgment besides what I have mentioned. We hear one and another speaking highly of that which aggravates our misery, and we cry out, with some of old, in unbelief, and say, "My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God." It is a strong speech to end with, "*my* God." However, the devil and we, both being liars, labour against this good work, for Satan is the father of lies; and as for us, "Let God be true, and every man a liar." In God's time, he does bring it to pass agreeably to his promise: "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness." This is done by purging the conscience, and leading me to believe that Christ bore *my* sins, and carried *my* sorrows. He next shows me that Christ was made sin for *me*, and that I am the righteousness of God in him; that I suffered the law in him, he being made a curse for me; that at Pilate's bar I was acquitted; that when the sword of divine justice smote him, God's hand was turned the other way on the

little ones. The Spirit leads us to his cross, and there we see judgment for us fully executed, and our sins gone. "He removed the iniquity of that land in one day." When this is the case, we see that we had victory over devils, and that in Christ Jesus. "He spoiled principalities and powers." We see the hand-writing, or holy law, that he magnified for us, with our old man, nailed to his cross; and as the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, so we find there is free access into the holiest of all, even into heaven above. Our prayers, that before came back to us, are now admitted; and as John says, "We know he heareth us." Our hopes, faith, desires, longings, and sacrifices of thanksgiving, enter into the very heart of our heavenly Father. And as Jesus rose again, we rose in him; and in experience we rise to newness of life. After this he went up to heaven above, and we in him; and in experience we are heavenly minded, and life and peace attend it. And having finished his work, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; and we are made to sit by representative in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, our covenant Head. Thus God the Father accepted us in him; and then sends the Holy Ghost upon us to let us know it, "For he testifies of Christ," and "sheds abroad the Father's love in our hearts."

Now this is bringing forth our righteousness as the light and our judgment as the noonday, which, blessed be God, my soul has often enjoyed. Therefore, "Commit thy way to him; trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass; and he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday." When the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings, then we shall go forth, (that is, from all confidence in the flesh,) and grow up, (that is, into Christ our living Head,) and that in all things.

But this is not always enjoyed. Oh no! This faith is tried with fire, and every fiery trial has this voice in it: "Trust in the Lord." Paul says, "Who hath delivered, who doth deliver, and in whom we trust he will yet deliver." The devil will come as he did to Peter. Says Christ, "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter says, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." "Blessed art thou, Simon!" But after this, "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, (he does not like your faith,) to sift you as wheat;" and so he did with a witness. But did his faith fail? No. "Why," say you, "he cursed, swore, and denied the Lord; and is not this faith failing?" No; Christ's prayer was that his faith might not fail. "But," say you, "was that prayer heard?" Yes; Christ told his Father at Lazarus's grave, "I know thou always hearest me." "But," say you, "I think yet his faith failed." But I say, No, it was not in exercise, and the fear of man and unbelief were dominant. But when Jesus looked on him, up sprang his faith; and after this, Christ put it three times to him whether he loved him; and he appealed to Jesus, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee," and Christ did not contradict him. Paul says, "Faith works by love." Therefore Peter must have had faith

But faith must be rooted up before it can be said to fail, for Peter stood firm as a rock after this; and Paul tells you "by faith we stand." Read the Acts, and see how boldly he stands up against the Pharisees. Now these times call for trust.

There is a set of hypocrites that will swarm round us in these trying times with a "Where is now thy God?" &c., and we are dumb men, in whose mouths are no reproofs. They will try us not a little, as also they did our blessed Lord: "He trusted in God that he would deliver him, let him deliver him," said they, "if he delight in him." And we in a measure shall tread in his steps; for they having heard us boast of the Lord's goodness to us, when he leaves us a little while and suffers them to have all the power (as they think) in their own hands, they laugh at our trusting in the Lord. But though we are pinched to the uttermost, and are ready at times to go to Egypt for help, yet he appears again, and we cry out in the midst of our troubles, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Now here no hypocrite can stand; and this is trust, and a trying of that trust.

(To be continued.)

THE SWORD OF JUSTICE AWAKENED AGAINST GOD'S FELLOW.

PART OF A SERMON BY RALPH ERSKINE, PREACHED BEFORE THE
ORDINANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, JULY 3, 1720.

(Continued from page 15.)

Third. To show you the need of his being both God and man in one person: "The man, God's Fellow." The cause of God, and the cause of man is referred to Christ; therefore he partakes of both natures, that he may be faithful to God, and merciful to man; a fit Mediator between God and man, to lay his hand upon both parties, because he partakes of both natures. Our Redeemer must be both subject to the law, and fulfil the law meritoriously. Now, if he had not been man, he could not have been subject to the law, and if he had not been God, he could not have merited by fulfilling the law; but now, being God-man, by his obedience he hath magnified the law, and made it honourable. Our Redeemer was to give his soul an offering for sin. Now, if he had not been man, he could not have had a soul to offer; if he had not been God, his soul could not have upheld itself, but must have died when his soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death; but now, his divine nature did support his human body and his human soul, under the weight of that burden which would have crushed a world of men and angels. Our Redeemer must both suffer and satisfy. Now, if he had not been man, he could not have suffered; and if he had not been God, he could not have given satisfaction by his sufferings; but, being God-man, his sufferings are dignified with infinite value and virtue. Our Redeemer must both die for us, and conquer death. Now, if he

had not been man, he could not have died, and therefore he took on him our nature, that he might taste death for every man; if he had not been God, he could not have destroyed, nor conquered death; but now, he is "declared to be the Son of God, with power, by the resurrection from the dead." There is the Man that is God's Fellow. But now,

Fourth. Consider the account we have of his mediatorial office, "My Shepherd." Here you may a little view, 1. How he comes to be called a Shepherd. And, 2. How the Lord of hosts comes to call him *his* Shepherd: "My Shepherd."

(1.) Then, how he is called a Shepherd. This will appear by noticing a few scriptures wherein he is so designated. He is called "the Shepherd of Israel." (Psal. lxxx. 1.) He is called the "Shepherd of souls." "Ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." (1 Pet. ii. 25.) He is called the good Shepherd. "I am the good Shepherd." (John x. 11.) O but it suits him well to commend himself! "I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd giveth his life for his sheep." He is called the great Shepherd. "Now, the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect," &c. (Heb. xiii. 20.) He is called the chief Shepherd. "When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." (1 Pet. v. 4.) He has all the qualities of a good and great shepherd. Does a shepherd take care to provide for his flock and feed them? so does Christ. "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd." (Isaiah xl. 11.) He feeds them with the bread of life. Does a shepherd water his flock? so does Christ; he gives them not only meat for their nourishment, but drink for the refreshment of his weary flock, even the water of life, proceeding out of the throne, through the conduit of the gospel; by which I understand the Spirit, that well of water springing up to everlasting life; and the influences of his grace, by which he strengthens, purifies, and comforts his people. Does a shepherd lead his flock to convenient pastures? so does Christ. "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock." He leads them to green pastures, and beside the still waters of gospel-ordinances and promises: and these pastures are sweeter to them than honey or the honey-comb. Does the shepherd heal his distressed flock? so does Christ. His name is Jehovah Rophi, "I am the Lord that healeth thee." Are there any here that are poor diseased sheep, plagued with atheism, unbelief, enmity, and pride? plagued with a backsliding heart? what think you of that Shepherd that says, "I will heal your backslidings, and love you freely?" Does the shepherd seek out the lost sheep till he find it? so does Christ. "He came to seek and to save that which was lost." Does the shepherd take special care of the poor tender sheep, that is so far behind that it can hardly follow the flock? so does Christ. "He gathers the lambs in his arms, carries them in his bosom, and gently leads those that

are with young." Does the shepherd prevent the straying of the sheep, and bring back such as go astray? so does Christ; he prevents their total apostasy, according to his covenant: "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." (Jer. xxxii. 40.) Hence comes it that his sheep never go back into perdition. "Though he fall, he shall not utterly be cast down; for the Lord upholds him with his hand." (Psal. xxxvii. 24.) Hence come their recoveries after falls, because this Shepherd gathers and brings back his straying sheep. See a sweet scripture to this purpose, Ezek. xxxiv. 11, 12, 13, 16, 23, compared particularly with verse 16. As this may be a sweet word to poor sheep, that have nothing, and see they have nothing: no good, no grace, no faith, no love, no repentance, no good qualifications of their own, nothing to recommend them to God but their want and necessity; and to weak sheep, that find they can do nothing, cannot pray, cannot believe, cannot mourn, cannot communicate, and therefore see an absolute need of Christ to be their righteousness and strength: so it may be an awakening word to the fat and strong sheep, those that are fat and full in themselves, and think they are increased with goods, and stand in need of nothing; that they have a good heart to God, and are not so ill as some persons: and to those that are strong, who think they can pray, and hear, and believe, and communicate well enough; what should hinder them? But whilst the poor and weak will be fed with mercy, the fat and the strong will be fed with judgment. Let the poor weak sheep, though sensible of great strayings, yet conceive hope. This Shepherd seeks that which was lost, and brings again that which was driven away. Were you driven away with a head-wind; driven away by the devil; driven away from your Shepherd by temptation and powerful corruption? Why, yet he brings again that which was driven away. Does a shepherd defend his flock from troubles, and such as would make a prey of them? so does Christ. When grievous wolves, whether in church or state, would destroy the poor sheep, whether in their persons or principles; yet "upon all the glory there shall be a defence," and "no weapon formed against them shall prosper." For "there is no enchantment against Jacob, nor divination against Israel." Does a shepherd know all the sheep of his flock, by his own mark upon them? so does Christ. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: The Lord knoweth them that are his." As his sheep hear and know his voice from the voice of a stranger, so he knows them, and calls his own sheep by name. (John x. 3.) But,

(2.) How does the Lord of Hosts come to call him *His* Shepherd? "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd." Why, he is God the Father's Shepherd in several respects; which I touch at only in a few words.

He is God's Shepherd, because God made him so; he has the Father's commission for this effect: "Him hath God the Father sealed." (John vi. 27.) Christ was appointed and authorised; he

was elected for this effect: "Behold my servant, whom I uphold: mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth." He transacted with him for this effect: "I have made a covenant with my chosen." He formally called him to this employment, and set him up to be a Shepherd: "I will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them; he shall be their Shepherd." (Ezek. xxxiv. 23.) He qualified him for this work, by a supereminent unction: "I have put my Spirit upon him, and he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles."

He is God's Shepherd, because God gave him the sheep: "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." (John xvii. 6.) They were thine by election; and thou gavest them to me, to be redeemed by me. This donation of the sheep to Christ is begun in election, and accomplished in effectual vocation: "All that the Father hath given me shall come to me."

He is God's Shepherd, because God recommends all his sheep to his special care: "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he has given me I should lose nothing." (John vi. 39.) God has given him the "heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost ends of the earth for his possession." All whom he chooses to be the objects of his special love, he lodges as a trust in the hands of Christ. He gave him the charge of the sheep; and his instructions are, not only to lose none, no not the least of them, the weakest of them, but to lose nothing; and as he will lose none, no person, so he will lose nothing, no part of the person, neither soul nor body.

He is God's Shepherd. Why? God appointed him to lay down his life for his sheep; "I lay down my life for my sheep; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. This commandment have I received of my Father." (John x. 18.) Christ suffered death, not only voluntarily, but in a way of subjection to his Father, that so the merit of his death might be every way full and acceptable to the Father. And so again,

He is God's Shepherd, because God approves of his undertaking and work, as his Shepherd, and loves him for this very reason. (John x. 17.) He approves of his doing and dying. His soul is delighted in this Shepherd: "Mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth." He openly declares his affection in him: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake."

In a word, he is God's Shepherd, because God the Father and Christ are equally concerned in keeping the sheep. (John x. 27—30.) The Father does so intrust Christ with the sheep, as yet that he casts not off the care of them. They are in the Father's hands as well as Christ's: "I and my Father are one;" though personally distinct, yet essentially one. The Man that is God's Fellow in this, has fellowship with the Father, that the Father's sheep are his sheep; and his sheep are the Father's sheep; and they are equally concerned and engaged in keeping the sheep; only Christ, as Mediator, is engaged for them as the Father's servant and commissioner: "My Shepherd."

Now, thus much concerning the character of the Person whom the sword of the Lord of Hosts must awake against; and, O! if we had a view, by a saving faith, of this glorious One, God's Shepherd, the Man that is his Fellow, God-man Mediator, we could say no less than that "he is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand." The white and red of his infinitely fair face would charm and allure us. Now,

II. The second thing. What sword must awake against this man? Why, in general, it is the sword of God's awful justice; which is metaphorically called a sword, because of its terrible, piercing, wounding, killing nature. Now, the strokes of this sword are either mediate or immediate; mediate, by the hands of men, particularly the sword of the civil magistrate; or, immediate, by the hands of God himself, without the intervention of such outward means. Now, the sword of justice that awaked against Christ and smote the Shepherd, is to be considered in both these respects; for his suffering as our Surety, by the stroke of justice's sword, was both external upon his body, and internal upon his soul.

1. There were his external sufferings in his body; and herein justice did strike more mediately by the hand of man; and especially in his severest bodily sufferings, justice did employ and make use of the sword of the civil magistrate. Magistrates have the sword of civil power and authority put into their hands, and they ought not to bear the sword in vain; they are a power which God has ordained, and armed with the sword for the punishment of malefactors. Though this is the right use of the magistrate's sword, yet sometimes the magistrate makes unjust use of it; as in this case, when the civil government, Herod, Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together against the holy child Jesus. (Acts iv. 27.) But whatever injustice was therein on man's part, yet, on God's part, impartial justice did therein act, while it did thereby bring about the death and sufferings of the Surety, which the hand and counsel of God determined before to be done. (Acts iv. 28.)

2. There were his internal sufferings in his soul; and herein justice did strike more immediately, for "it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and to make his soul an offering for sin." (Isaiah liii. 10.) Thus the sword of justice was such as pierced both soul and body. This two-edged sword was edged with the violence of the earth, and with the fury of heaven; it was edged with the curse of the law, and with the wrath of God. But more particularly, what sort of sword is this? O rouse up your ears and hearts to hear and consider what sort of sword it was that awaked against the Man that is God's Fellow!

First. It is a *broad* sword; so broad that it covers all mankind, and hangs over all Christless sinners; nay, all would have fallen a sacrifice to it, unless Christ had come between them and it. When this sword did awake against Christ, he found it as broad as the curse

denounced against mankind upon the back of our fall in Adam, which you may read, that you may the better understand what the Man that is God's Fellow underwent, when he substituted himself in our room, and undertook to suffer the punishment due for our sins. The curse pronounced against Adam, and in him against all his posterity, in all the parts of it, lighted upon Christ. You read of it generally, "In the day thou eatest, thou shalt surely die;" or, "Dying, thou shalt die;" (Gen. ii. 17;) and more particularly, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Gen. iii. 17—19.) Whence you see the curse has three parts. 1. The frailties and infirmities that the human nature was subject to after the fall. 2. The calamities incident to man's life: "Thou shalt eat thy meat with the sweat of thy brow; thorns and thistles shall the ground bring forth." 3. Death: "Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return;" which has in it the death of the soul as well as the body. Here is an abridgment of all the curses of the Bible; and this broad sword must awake against the Man that is God's Fellow and our Surety, for this curse in all its parts seized upon him.

(1.) The first were the frailties and infirmities of human nature, as part of the curse. This seized upon Christ at his incarnation; for his body was of the dust like ours, subject to the like infirmities with ours. He took not on him our nature in its prime and glory, but after it was broken and shattered with the fall: "He came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh." (Rom. viii. 3.)

(2.) As to the calamities and miseries that attended man's life, this part of the curse seized on him also. He ate his bread with the sweat of his brow, when he followed the calling of a handicraftsman; and after he entered into his public ministry, he travelled from place to place, watched whole nights in prayer; and thus might be said truly to eat his bread with the sweat of his brow. As for other calamities, never one met with more; the world denied him a lodging, the fig-tree denied him figs; he was blasphemed by his enemies, betrayed by one of his disciples, and forsaken by them all.

(3.) As for the death threatened in the curse, why, dying, he died indeed; for the sword did run through his body and soul at once, when he endured the cross, and despised the shame. His body was sore tortured, and his soul was sore amazed, and very heavy. (Mark xiv. 33.) His bodily sufferings were extremely great, as you may see from the evangelists; and yet as nothing in comparison of his soul-sufferings; while he endured the wrath of God immediately upon his soul. Here was a broad sword indeed, as broad and extensive as all the curses of the law, all the wrath that the elect deserved for their sins; for God designed not to pass by one

of their sins without a satisfaction made to justice, but to sue the cautioner for them all. O but he needed a broad back that could bear the shock of such a broad sword! Well, so he had; for he was God as well as man: "Awake, O sword, against the man, *My Fellow.*"

Second. It is a *long* sword, if we may so call it, infinite in length from the point to the hilt of the sword. It is as long as eternity; and this makes the punishment of the damned eternal, because the sword of divine wrath, that pierces them, is so long that it never can reach to the hilt, in such finite worms as they are. The duration of the wrath and the curse is eternal; because the sinner, being a mere creature, cannot at one shock meet with the infinite wrath of God, and satisfy justice at once; therefore God supports the poor damned creature for ever under wrath, because it cannot, being finite, satisfy infinite justice; but our Shepherd, being God-man, the Man God's Fellow, and therefore being of infinite worth and value, of infinite strength and power, was able to satisfy justice, and bear all at once that which the elect could never have borne. Yet he met with the essentials of that which sin deserves, viz., death and the curse, the hiding of his Father's face, and the suspending and keeping back of that consolation, which, by virtue of the personal union, flowed from the Godhead to the manhood; and also, he had the actual sense and feeling of the wrath of God, the awakened sword of the justice of God actually smiting him; so that, though men wondered how he could be dead so soon, not knowing what strokes of infinite justice he met with, yet these strokes lighting upon the like of him, the Man God's Fellow, were equivalent to the eternal punishments and torments of the damned.

Third. It is a *bloody* and *insatiable* sword. This sword of justice was not satisfied with the blood of Sodom and Gomorrah; it was not satisfied with the blood of the old world; it was not satisfied with the blood of bulls, goats, and all the legal sacrifices of old; yea, the blood of the whole creation cannot give it satisfaction, though it were bathed therein. Without the shedding of more blood, better blood, there is no remission, no satisfaction to justice, no real satisfaction with God; no salvation of the sinner; therefore, "Awake, O sword, against the Man that is my Fellow." Till it be drunk with the blood of this man, it never gets a satisfying draught of blood. Well then, says this man, "Lo, I come;" let justice take a full draught of my blood. Well, "Awake, O sword;" let the blood of this Man, my Fellow, be shed; shed at his circumcision, shed in the garden, shed in his being crowned with thorns, shed in his being scourged, shed in his crucifying. Well, thus the blood of God's Fellow was shed. What say you now, O sword of justice? Are you pleased? are you satisfied with blood? Yes, I have got my fill of blood. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." I am pleased and satisfied to the full with his obedience to the death; I have got all the satisfaction I wanted from my Shepherd, and I have no more to demand of him, or of his sheep either. O! glory to God, that ever this bloody, insatiable

sword did awake against one that could give it blood enough, satisfaction enough; and yet,

Fourth. It is a *dreadful, terrible, flaming, and devouring* sword. So it is represented, (Gen. iii. 24,) where it is said, "Cherubim were placed, and a flaming sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life." The least flame of this sword of justice is enough to burn up the whole creation; and, O! how terrible will this sword be for ever to them that live and die in a Christless state! The dreadfulness of this sword is no where to be seen so lively as in its awaking against the man that was God's Fellow. His human nature trembled at the sight of it: "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say?" (John xii. 27.) He saw the dreadful storm coming, the black cloud arising, and so much wrath in it, that he knew not how to express himself. See Matt. xxvi. 38, and Mark xiv. 34, where he cries out, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." We never hear of one groan from Christ for all his bloody sufferings; when crowned with thorns, scourged, and laid on the cross: "As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." But on the first entrance of his soul-sufferings, he fell a lamenting: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful." The original words are most emphatic. He was *begirt* with sorrow; he was plunged over head and ears in the wrath of God. All the faculties and powers of his soul were begirt with sorrow; "he began to be sore amazed." (Mark xiv. 33.) The word signifies the greatest extremity of amazement, and such as makes a man's hair stand, and his flesh creep; and it is added, he was "very heavy." If we consult the derivation of the word, it signifies, a sinking of spirit; his heart was like wax melted at the sight of that terrible wrath. But the evangelist Luke has yet a stronger expression: "Being in an agony, his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood, falling to the ground;" (Luke xxi. 44.) being in an agony, engaged in a combat, as the Greek word signifies. He had before combated with principalities and powers in the wilderness; but now he is combating with the Father's wrath. He was in an agony, and sweat great drops of blood. All sweats arise from weakness and pressures of nature; therefore a dying sweat is a cold sweat; but never one, but Christ, sweat a bloody sweat; and great drops of blood, in such abundance that it came through his garments, and fell to the ground; and this was all only the first onset, a little skirmish before the main battle; for the main fight was to be on mount Calvary, after they nailed him to the cross. Then, on a sudden, the curtain of heaven is drawn, the sun loses his light. He was now combating with all the powers of hell and darkness, and therefore the field he was to fight in was dark. The punishment of loss and sense both was due to us for sin, therefore he suffered both. The punishment of loss, for all comfort now fails Christ; angels appeared before, strengthening him; but now not an angel dares peep out of heaven for his comfort; yea, now his God fails him, in respect of his comfortable presence. Formerly his heart failed him, in some respects, but now his God; which

makes him cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Never was there such a cry in heaven or earth, before or since. Yea, now he suffered the punishment of sense also due to us; for now all the wrath of God was poured down immediately upon his soul. All the sluices of divine fury are opened, and all the waves and billows of his vengeance passed over him. "Darkness was over all the earth." All things were hushed into silence, that Christ might, without interruption, grapple with his Father's wrath, until he cried, "It is finished!" and gave up the ghost. What think you of this dreadful sword that awaked against our Surety, the man God's Fellow, when he was to expiate our sins?

Fifth. It is a *bright* sword, a clear, a glittering sword. There is no spot of rust or stain upon this sword; no, the sword is spotless. Justice, holy justice. There is no unrighteousness with God. As there is no drop of unrighteousness in the cup of the damned, who are all damned by an act of holy justice; so there was no drop of injustice in the cup of wrath, which Christ, the Surety, drank up to the bottom. Christ had said of old, "Lo, I come; I come to be cautioner, and enter myself in the room of poor sinners, to pay their debt." Justice, indeed, could not have required our debt of him, if he had not undertaken it; but having entered himself cautioner for our debt, he became liable to the payment of it. Hence, when Christ saw the sword, and was crying, "Father, save me from this hour," he immediately corrected himself with a but; "but for this cause came I into this hour." (John xii. 27.) And in the beginning of the twenty-second Psalm, which you know is one of the most clear prophecies of Christ's sufferings, after he had cried out, (verse 1,) "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" which is not the expression of any quarrelling, complaint, or discouragement, but of sinless nature, when arraigned before the tribunal of God, affected with the horror of divine wrath, and not being able easily to endure that there should be a cloud between God and him; I say, after these words he adds, (verse 3,) "But thou art holy." He cannot complain of injustice. "Thou art just and honest in exacting all the debt at my hand, which I became surety for. I have all the sins of the elect to answer for; and therefore I justify thee, O Father, in giving me this stroke of thy awakened sword. Thou art holy; thou art clear when thou judgest." It is a clear, bright, spotless, and holy sword.

Sixth. It is a *living* sword. Do you think that God is speaking to a piece of cold iron, when he says, "Awake, O sword?" Nay, this sword is God himself, the living God. God's justice is God himself, a just God. Of this living sword you read, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Heb. x. 31.) Those that fall into hell, they fall into the hands of the living God; and there they are an everlasting sacrifice to this ever-living sword. Christ, when he came to satisfy justice, fell into the hands of this living God; and if he had not been God's equal, God's Fellow, he could never have got out of his hands again. If this sword be a living sword, even the living God, O but it must be a great and strong

sword, as the sword of God is called. (Isa. xxvii. 1.) "It takes the strength of God to wield it; and so he does here: "Awake, O sword." It takes the strength of God to bear the blow of it; and so it is here: "Awake against the Man that is my Fellow." One blow of it given to the angels and seraphim, would have brought them all down from the battlements of heaven to the bottom of hell. "Awake, O sword." God is here speaking to himself, as if he had said, "Let me arise in my armour of vengeance and fury, and fall upon my Shepherd, the Man that is my Fellow." It is a living sword that can awake itself. Thus you see what sort of sword it is that awakes against Christ. O to see and believe this truth this day!

(To be continued.)

TRANSLATION OF AN OLD PRAYER.

[The following was translated from the Arabic [in the year 1803, and is now taken from an old magazine. The translation may appear formal, but the prayer contains the breathings of an elect soul.]

Most high, incomprehensible, and eternal Lord God, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders. The heavens are not pure in thy sight, and yet thou art pleased, in Jesus Christ, to look down on, and to dwell in poor man, who is sinful dust and ashes. Thou livest in the highest heavens and yet in the lowest hearts. Good Lord, make my heart so low in mine own esteem; that it may be so high in thine that thou mayest delight to dwell in it for ever. When I consider all that thou hast done for me, and in me, together with all that I have done against thee, I am ashamed; confusion covers my face as a veil, having transgressed all thine holy laws, from the first to the last, from the least to the greatest, as well by commission as by omission, as well by actual as by original sin, knowingly as well as ignorantly, both wilfully as well as willingly, on thy days as well as on other days, in thy house as in other houses, in doing thy work as in doing my own work, in duties as out of duties, in praying sins, reading sins, meditating sins, in hearing the preached word sins, and other ordinance sins—so that my repentance must be repeated of, and my prayers prayed against. My sighs and groans have need of tears, and my tears of re-doubled tears.

How, Lord, have I made thine holy things unholy, and turned thy grace into wantonness, quenching the motions of thine Holy Spirit by my wilfulness. How have I treasured up wrath against the day of wrath unto my poor soul, and made thee a savour of death unto it, when thou camest as a savour of life! How have I hated to be reformed, and run from thee, when thou wast running to meet me in love and in mercy! How have I cast thy promises behind me, and trampled thy precepts under my feet! How many times have I broken my promises, vows, and the covenants I made with thee in my straits! With how much eagerness and earnestness have

I served my sinful lusts, more than thee in thine ordained services! How much more pains have I taken for earthly things than for the things appertaining to thy kingdom! How far more delightful have things here below, and the remembrance of them, been to me than things above! How much sweeter has sin been to me than grace, and how have I bent my will against thy will in all things! How have I run in the ways of destruction, labouring delightfully to bring others into a participation of my own sins, tempting them to do the same things! How easily did I believe the suggestions of the devil, and with what ardour have I left thy work, and how often, good Lord Jesus, to do his! Nay, many times have I tempted Satan to tempt me to sin, when I knew that the wages of sin was death, temporal, spiritual, and eternal! I have done my utmost to destroy both body and soul; but what are these sins to those I cannot recollect both for their greatness and multitude! Nay, what are all the sins I have committed to those I should have committed, hadst not thou, in love and in mercy, O most loving Lord, restrained me, and come in to my help and succour, when I was helpless and without prospect of succour? Thou ownedst me when I would not own thee; thou didst run after me when I ran from thee; thou continuedst knocking when I would not open my heart to thee, and wast contented to stand at the door without until thy locks were wet with the dew of Heaven; and when I was most pitiless, then didst thou pity me most—pity me, and even didst take me from myself, and out of the power of all my adversaries, and didst enter with forcible possession into my heart, there to sup, lodge, and dwell for ever, which thou didst find more unclean than a dunghill. And is not this enough to make all the creatures in heaven and earth to stand amazed, at the condescension of so great a God as thou art?

Lord, what couldst thou have done more for me than thou hast done, to bring me out of the death of sin to the life of grace, out of the vicinity of hell into the possession of heaven? Thou hast not only delivered me out of the paw of that roaring lion, the devil, who had well nigh devoured me, but hast given me of thine own power and strength to overcome him, to trample him under my feet, and to despise him to his face. Thou hast discovered to me his falseness and his malice, and the dreadfulness of my own heart, which has so often betrayed me.

What can I render then, blessed Jesus, to thee for all thy beneficence, who am a poor, vile, wretched, and miserable sinner—a worm, and no man? What render to thee, who art almighty, and the Giver of all things? O that thou wouldst accept of what I have to give thee, which is only these two poor mites, my soul and body! It is true, Lord, I confess they are not worthy to be put into thy rich treasury; but if thou, Almighty Father, wilt be pleased to stamp upon me the image of thy Son Jesus Christ, I am sure they will pass current in thine heavenly courts, and thou thyself wilt esteem them portions of thine especial and peculiar treasure. Set me then as a seal upon thine heart, and let thy love be set upon

me, so that being out of love with all else, I may be in love with thee only.

When, Lord, shall sin be utterly destroyed, and rooted out of me? When shall the time arrive that it shall be crucified unto me, and I unto it? When shall I neither feel nor see it more, and when wilt thou give me a final conquest over it, and utterly destroy it in me? When shall come that cheering day wherein I shall not sin, when I shall put off sin as an old garment, and never thenceforth put it on—when all tears, sighs, and groans for sin, shall be expelled and extinguished, and thou, O Lord, be all in all?

Yet though sin be in my heart, let not my heart, dear Lord, be in sin; and though sin rule over me as a tyrant, let it not reign in me as a sovereign; and though I cannot live without sin, yet let me live without consenting to, or approving of any sin; and though temptations fall upon me, suffer me not to fall into temptations, but deliver me from all evil. Knowing that thou hast provided for me a kingdom, let me here demean myself as if I were already a subject thereof. Write thy laws in mine heart, by the finger of thine Holy Spirit, and so check me by thy rule and guidance over me, that I may neither go astray to the right hand of pleasure, nor to the left hand of profit. Wean me from the world, ere thou takest me from the world, and to all things in the world, which are its honours, pleasures, riches, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. Give me those things only which can make me thine, and only thine. Teach me to use the world as if I used it not, that I may not abuse it, myself, nor thee, who hast given it me to use. Give me grace to be ever mindful of my last hour, and of the reckoning that I must make before thee, thou Judge of all. Remove all my doubt, fears, and cares for the things of this life, that I may cast all my care upon thee, who carest for me—for the earth is thine, and the fulness thereof. Grant that I may know how to want, and how to abound, and to be content in every condition, knowing that all things shall be for my greatest good, and that though affliction reign during the night, joy cometh in the morning. Let my last thoughts, loving Lord, be my best thoughts, and my last day, the best of my days. Order so, that I may be willing to lose all, to gain and to retain thee, esteeming it no loss, but great gain. Let me be willing to decrease, that thou mayest increase, to spend and to be spent for thee; and be as content to wear the crown of thorns here as the crown of glory hereafter. Let me be as willing to suffer for thy glory as to reign with thee in glory, that I may desire heaven more for thee than thee for heaven.

Would, O Jesus, that I could, with Mary, be content to sit at thy feet, and to wash them with my tears, standing behind thee, being ashamed to come before thee. How willingly do I, with the prophet, wish mine head were a fountain of water, that mine eyes might gush out rivers of tears! O that I could, with David, weep *continually*, with Magdalen, *abundantly*, and with Peter, *bitterly*, that I might suffer my soul no rest until I come into thy blessed arms, the saving ark of rest, which shall for ever cause me to float

and swim above all the storms and tempests of Satan. Grant, O Christ, that having past the time of my pilgrimage here in thy fear, I may die in thy favour; unite me to thy blessed self so closely, that I may become bone of thy bone, and flesh of thy flesh. Make me a member of thy mystical body here, that I may be a member of thy glorious body hereafter for ever.

Sanctify all afflictions and temptations to me, and lay no more on me than thou wilt enable me to bear; and take not thine holy Spirit, the Comforter, from me. Be thou mine help in want, my strength in weakness, my joy in sorrow, my comfort in grief, my riches in poverty, my pillow in prison, my home in banishment, my health in sickness, and my life in death. Let my blessedness in thee enable me to see my cursedness out of thee; let thy fulness cause me to see mine emptiness, thy beauty my vileness, thy riches my poverty, thy obedience my disobedience, thy perfection my imperfection, thy heaven my deserved hell, and thy glory my ignominy.

Dear Lord, thou camest from heaven to earth, to exalt me from earth to heaven. Thou tookest my vile nature on thee, to make me partaker of thy divine nature; thou becamest an heir of misery to make me an heir of mercy, yea, co-heir with thy blessed self of heaven's glory and happiness, which is thy Father, Self, and Holy Spirit. Thou wast made a curse that I might inherit a blessing; thou didst once that I might live for ever; thou didst wear a crown of thorns that I might wear a crown of glory; thou sufferedst thy Father's frowns that I might enjoy his smiles; thou didst drink up the dregs of thy Father's wrath that I might drink to the bottom of his love; thou didst bear all my sin that I might appear without sin; thou didst shed all thy heart's blood to wash me from my blood; by thy stripes am I healed, and by thy wounds all my deadly wounds are cured.

Thy love, O loving Lord, surpasseth all understanding, thy goodness all human love, that did so much for me when I was not a friend but an enemy; not when I was in covenant with thee, but when I was, to all feeling of mine, out of the covenant; not when I loved thee, but hated thee; not when I was comely, but uncomely; not when I was holy, but unholy; not when I desired thy favour, but when I desired it not; not when I asked for it, but even when I thought not of it; not because I did anything for thee, but when I had done all things in my power against thee; not when I was thy servant, but the devil's; and all this not for thine advantage, but for mine; not for thy good, but for mine; not only for thy glory, but to bring me to glory; which thou didst, looking for no adequate return, for thou lovedst me only because thou wouldst love me.

O the height, length, breadth, and depth of divine love! That an offended God should pray, and pay, and promise, and give, and die, and live, to reconcile to thyself offending man, cursed man, vile man, wretched man, worthless man, nothing man, less than a drop of a bucket, or the dust of the balance. Let these

thy wondrous mercies and compassions cause me ever to admire and adore thy loving-kindness, and exclaim, "Lord, what is man that thou art so mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou so regardest him" as to visit him, to magnify him, to dwell in him, to delight in him, to set thine heart upon him, and to give him and do him all the good thou couldst; having provided for him an incomprehensible and eternal weight of glory in heaven, where thou art; for with thee, and in thee, is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore—to which fulness, Lord, bring me in thy due time, that I may behold thy beauty and thy glory, and see thee face to face; that by the light of thy blessed countenance my body may shine brighter than the sun, and my soul be made wholly perfect as thou art.

Grant these things, O heavenly Father, and whatsoever else thou deemest needful for me, both for soul and body, for the alone merits of thy Son, my Saviour, thy Christ, my Jesus, for whom I bless thee, that he is the Lord my righteousness; and to whom with thy glorious Majesty, and the Holy Spirit, three Persons in one God, be given, as is due, all honour, glory, dominion, and thanksgiving, by me and all thine elect, now and for evermore. Amen.

[We are not certain who was the author of the above prayer; but from internal evidence we should ascribe it to Ephrem Syrus, from whose writings we inserted an extract in a former volume.—Ede.]

A LETTER BY THE LATE THOMAS HARDY.

My Christian Brother,—I received yours last Saturday, concerning coming your way.

I am sorry to say that I cannot stay a Lord's day with you, being obliged to stay five here, and one on my return at Deptford. But if you think it would be agreeable, I would engage, with the Lord's will, to call on you just as I did last time I was with you, on my way to London; or if you think it would suit you better, I could reach you on the Tuesday night after next to preach Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday; but during that week the moon would be young, as that Tuesday would only be the 11th of November, and the moon changes on the 7th, the Friday before. I therefore think, that as Sunday the 16th of November will be my last Sunday here, I had better leave Deal for Hastings on Monday, the 12th of November; and if it would be convenient for you to meet me there, as you did before, I should confess the favour; but if not, I could reach you in the morning of Tuesday, to preach on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday nights at Eastbourn, Hailsham, and Brighton, or where you may fix among yourselves, and that week there will be a good moon for the country people. But I leave it with God and you to determine; and I wish you to let me know at Deal as soon as possible, that I may arrange my other journeys accordingly.

I would heartily give you all my best Christian love, and desire

for you and myself that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may be with our spirits, and I assure you, my brother, your dark and desperate feelings are nothing new to my heart or my ears. The burden, the plague, and the devilishness of our flesh, surpass all our forethoughts and conceptions. Who can know it? saith the Lord. I am persuaded we shall never know the whole of that hidden hell within us. It is purely devilish in all its movements, and desires a determined enemy to God and all godliness. I am sick at heart of it daily, and daily groan and sigh over it; but I cannot find it at all amended, nor can I think I do rightly repent of it. In short, I think all is spoiled and shameful that comes from me, or is done by me.

I plainly see that wretched man can only oppose God's way of saving him, either by blindly setting up his own righteousness, or despairing because he has none to set up. I can neither do nor believe, and I cannot refrain either from doing or believing, for Christ liveth in me. God is as much concerned to carry on the work as he was to begin it. I am ever sinking, yet swim. I am strengthened and comforted a little, and continually doubt afterwards whether this strength and comfort come from God. If distrust and unthankfulness would weary God out, I think I must have been in hell before now. But almighty love grips us fast, and will not quit its hold. Many floods cannot drown it, and all our many sins cannot disgust it.

That which is born of the Spirit cannot die, or be corrupted, though it is surrounded with corruptions. Gold will not perish in the fire, or corrupt in a dunghill. This keeps up the groaning, sighing, and praying. The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus cannot be killed, and we and all our sins are nothing in comparison of His unsearchable greatness. The Father does not view him through our eyes, but sees him, in his own all-perfect and divine discernment, as his Altogether Worthy, the Delight of his soul; altogether worthy of all the pardons and all the favours he asks for us. "I know," saith he, "that thou hearest me always." And he left this cordial behind him: "Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." But perhaps you will say I have a hard heart, and cannot pray. I would say, Try what hard-hearted prayers will do. I am often driven to that pass, and it succeeds to my surprise. The worse our prayers seem, the sweeter does the grace seem that hears them.

I would conclude by saying, Despair not. Come what will, despair is God's and the poor sinner's worst enemy, and the devil's strongest hold. Deal with God to the last breath, though it be with sighs, and groans, and lookings up. This woeful course brought Jonah out of the belly of hell, and why should it not bring you and me out? My love to yourself and wife. The Lord bless you in all things.

36, Duke Street, Deal, Oct. 28, 1828.

THOMAS HARDY.

[The above letter was handed to us as an unpublished one. The friend who gave it to us, however, will find it, except the first paragraph, in Fowler's edition of Hardy's Letters, page 35.—Eds.]

EXAMINE YOURSELVES WHETHER YE BE IN THE FAITH.

My dear Friend,—It is plain that all men, as they come into the world, are blind touching spiritual things. “Darkness hath covered the earth, and gross darkness the people.” “There is none that understandeth, no, not one.” To all feeling they are dead, and in a condemned state. Judgment has come upon all men, for all have sinned. In heart, man is an enemy to God, in practice, a follower of sin and vanity, led captive by the devil at his will, with a filthy conscience and a polluted mind. His mind and conscience are alike defiled. This is a true picture of every one born into this world. What a loathsome sight! Such are all men before God; and such will they be in their own eyes, when God the Spirit enlightens them with the light of the living.

I will endeavour to set the one state against the other, that you and I may, in the sight of a just God, be enabled to decide on which side we are. The Lord enable us so to do, and may he grant that we may not deceive ourselves, nor be deceived by any!

I know not how it is with you, but as respects myself, I am compelled to take the apostle's advice, and often to *examine* myself whether I am in the faith. For I can assure you, that at times, and often too, I know not where I am nor what I am, nor should I at times like to give a decided answer as to whose I am; but, bless his dear and precious name, he does now and then enable me, a poor wretch, to say, “My Beloved is mine, and I am his.” All is well when I can say this. Thus I know that when God the Spirit begins a real work in the heart of God's dear people, two things are sure to take place: light shines into the understanding, and life is felt in the soul.

The hypocrite has but light in the head, whilst darkness reigns in the heart. Hence the Lord's caution in his day, to take heed that the light that was in them be not darkness; whilst to others he said, “He that followeth me, shall not abide in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” It is plain, then, that there is a light which is darkness, and a light that springs from life that shall never become darkness. And sure I am that both these lights come by the word of God; the former by its coming in word only, and the latter by its coming in power, and demonstration of God the Holy Ghost.

Now, as both these operations of the word convince the soul of sin, I have not found it an easy matter to distinguish the one from the other; but the difference appears to be in the soul's deliverance. A man by striving, prayer, and diligence gets the better of his sins, as he supposes, without being brought to the feet of Christ as a poor, perishing, guilty sinner. His convictions cease, and he views himself in a different light from that in which he once did. Now, he seats himself in the easy chair of delusion, concludes that he is in a safe state, and claims all the privileges of a child of God.

Solomon calls this "an inheritance gotten hastily." "But the end thereof shall not be blessed."

It is not so, however, with the poor soul to whom the Spirit of God comes with good purpose. It is quite the reverse. He strives and works as hard as the other, but instead of getting better, he gets worse and worse. Sin, by the application of the law, works in him all manner of concupiscence. The great deep of his heart begins to be broken up. Evil thoughts, pride, anger, covetousness, with many more sins, make their appearance; and before he can get the better of one, twenty others will rise up against him. Here the poor soul will labour day and night, but all in vain. His sins, like the wind, carry him away, and show themselves in everything he says, does, or thinks; even in his prayers, his tears, and his most holy things. This cuts the poor soul deeply indeed. His mind, instead of being stayed on God, is carried away with a thousand vanities. Lust boils up in his heart, and he feels as if he were set on fire of hell. Every thought that rolls across his mind brings fresh guilt with it. And being exercised thus, the poor soul is out of breath and out of heart; he pants, he sighs, he groans, he cries, and would, if it were possible, fly away from himself; but finds all in vain. The sore of his guilty conscience continually runs, and the burden of his sin daily increases. This makes his spirit faint. His poor heart droops, and into the horrible pit of unbelief he sinks, and his mouth becomes shut. That Christ is a perfect Saviour and will save his people, he has not a doubt, but he cannot see or believe himself to be one of that blessed number. The poor soul shut up in this prison would give a thousand worlds, if he had them, to *know* and to be *assured* that Christ would save him. But he thinks that so holy a God will never look upon so vile a wretch as he, and concludes his case to be hopeless. If you converse with such a soul of the promises in Christ, he will put them away. His soul refuseth to be comforted. Thus he is shut up under the bondage of the law and cannot come forth; and sure I am that nothing but the exceeding greatness of God's power can deliver such a one, by working faith in his heart; which the Spirit does by taking of the things of Jesus and showing them to the sinner,—his atoning blood, his dying love, and his sufferings on the cross. This makes the man's spirit soft and meek; humbles him under a sense of his sins, and leads him to confess that God would be just if he were to take vengeance on his wickedness; and to acknowledge that if he ever should be saved, it must be by rich, free, and sovereign grace.

Here, my dear friend, a blessed way is opened for pardon and peace to flow to a poor trembling, guilty, self-condemned sinner, in and through the precious blood of a dear and precious Christ. When this is the case, the work is done; the poor soul acknowledges himself guilty and pleads for mercy. "God be merciful to me a sinner" is his prayer; and when he is brought to this spot, deliverance is near at hand. God fills the hungry with good things; he opens their eyes to see his pardoning love in the face of

Jesus Christ, and by a divine power enables them to run out by faith, and fall down at the feet of Jesus with, "Lord, save, or I perish." The soul that is brought here will never go away empty. Pardon and peace are sure to be revealed. God meets the poor sinner in Christ and kisses him, and says, "This is my son, who was dead and is alive again." The Spirit of life from Christ Jesus enters the soul, purges away the love of sin, sheds abroad the love of God in his heart, washes and purifies the conscience by the blood of sprinkling, softens and meekens it with his own grace, clothes the poor sinner with the righteousness of Christ, and acquits him from all condemnation. The soul is now translated from the sentence of death under the law to life and immortality under the gospel of Christ. He is transplanted from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. A new spirit is put within him, which sweetly and blessedly enables him to cry, Abba, Father; and his own conscience bears witness to the same. Now "the winter is past," and "the voice of the turtle is heard" in the land. Here joy and singing spring up in the heart, and praise and thanksgiving go forth from the lips. The soul takes the cup of salvation, and pours forth thanksgiving to God.

Now, my dear friend, let us bring this great subject home to our own conscience, and ask this important question in the sight of a just and holy God, for I love a religion close at home, between God and my own soul, and I trust it is so with you. Can you lay your hand upon your heart, in the sight of God, with a clear conscience, and own a part or the whole of such blessed experience as this? If you cannot, may the Lord in his rich love, grace, and mercy, make you miserable until you can! The poor writer of this has to bless, and thank, and praise the ever-blessed Trinity, that he has written no more than what the Lord has taught him in his own soul by blessed experience; and I now ask you, or any God-fearing person, whether that poor soul is a justified man or not? and do favour me with a decided answer in your next. Not that I want the opinion of any soul living on this blessed subject, for he that believeth hath the witness in his own conscience and needs no man to teach him.

From time to time I am enabled by faith to view my all and in all in a precious, suffering, bleeding Christ. Then the soft tears of love and gratitude, and joy and peace, flow freely down, and the delightful sensations of bliss and pleasure roll into my peaceful soul, seeing my all in a precious Christ, seeing that my sanctification is as complete as my justification! *In Him* I see spotless innocence, glorious purity, unblemished holiness, and all-glorious excellence. Was he set apart? I am set apart in him; therefore every excellence that is in Christ is mine. This looking to Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith has an assimilating, transforming power in those who are living souls. Beholding thus Christ's glory, "we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory." It certainly is so. Do you, my dear friend, know what it is? If you do not, you have reason to doubt your religion. May the Lord enable you and me from day to day to look narrowly

as to what are the effects of these things in our own souls. May we be assured that God is not mocked, and may he enable us to live by the faith of the Son of God; for if we live by the faith of the Son of God, we shall surely have an inward conflict to try and oppose us. The Lord grant that we may have a sweet and sin-subduing view of Christ; that the precious springs of divine grace may water our souls; that we may see the glory of God shining on us in the face of Jesus; that we may vitally experience the despised Jesus of Nazareth as our All in All; that we may find power spring out of him to control all our raging, opposing lusts, and that we may remember that all true happiness must come from Jesus Christ alone.

It is the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ that sanctifies the whole elect of God. If the blood of beasts sanctified typically, how much more shall the blood of Christ sanctify completely! Oh! precious blood! Oh! glorious righteousness! May its sweet and blessed efficacy be distilled into our souls day by day! May we feel the vital and glorious dew from Christ our sanctification and justification upon us, day by day! I want nothing but this. My soul is half in paradise now. All that Christ is and has is mine. Blessed be God the Father for the precious gift of his dear Son! Blessed for ever be the Lord Jesus Christ, who willingly undertook to become a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, to take upon him our sins and guilt, to agonise, to be spit upon, crowned with thorns, scourged, mocked, and nailed to the cross: to be forsaken of God, and to shed his most precious blood and die, that such guilty, hell-deserving sinners as you and I might live; and to rise again for our justification! Oh! the unspeakable love of God the Father in Christ Jesus to guilty fallen man! And blessed be the Eternal Spirit for quickening, enlightening, guiding, and teaching such poor, blind, helpless wretches as we are, to feel, and see, in some small measure, our miserable state by nature, and to guide us into that narrow path that leads to the feet of Jesus, to confess our sins, and beg and implore pardon and forgiveness of God in and through his all-prevailing name; and also for taking of the precious things of Jesus and revealing them to us.

May the Lord, in love and grace and mercy, grant that we may live at his blessed feet daily, and receive out of his never-failing fulness every mercy, blessing, and favour for time and for eternity; and when these tottering tabernacles are to be taken down and to be no more seen, and we come to the swellings of Jordan, may the Lord grant that we may then depart in the arms of everlasting love, and hear that blessed welcome voice, saying, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world!" May this be our blessed, happy portion; then shall we cast our crowns at his blessed feet, and sing, "Salvation to God and the Lamb, who hath washed us, and redeemed us, by his most precious blood!" Hallelujah! Amen!

THE GOLDEN RULE.

My dear Friend,—Through the tender mercies of a compassionate, long-suffering, and forbearing God, I am once more permitted to write you a few lines.

Since I last wrote, I have had many changes, many ups and downs, ins and outs, turnings and windings—sometimes labouring under temptations, and sometimes triumphing over them. Sometimes, through my self-confidence and pride, I have been permitted to fall into various temptations. Then I have groaned, sighed, and cried unto the Lord to keep me, uphold me, lead me, teach me, and guide me, that I may be safe and not perish. I have then felt tender in conscience, cautious, humble, and prayerful; fearful of my actions; humble in feeling myself perfect weakness, and unable to stand a single moment unless upheld by the Holy Ghost; and prayerful in begging the dear Lord to “keep me from evil that it may not grieve me.” There has been a listening to the rebuke of conscience, and a going according to the little hints, checks, and warnings within, about what some people call little things, such as taking home a few apples or pears in one’s pocket out of a garden that does not belong to us, or even picking them up and eating them there, or taking cuttings off plants and carrying them away, or digging ground deep and well, instead of shuffling it over according to one’s base, carnal, and ungodly inclination. When I have been about to do these things, and a thousand others, these sweet words have come with power: “Do unto others as you would others should do unto you.” O what peace, humility, and calmness have I felt when I have been enabled, according to this heavenly principle, to do unto others as I would have them do to me! O what sweet gratitude to the Lord have I felt for his kindness in keeping me! O what a sweet reward is this for gospel obedience! Blessed and praised be the name of the Lord! he has kept me, and rewarded me in it.

Then again I have felt hard, cold, indifferent, and stupid, and seemed of all men the most miserable. I have no heart for prayer, reading, or anything spiritual. I am quite shut up in unbelief. My life has been a burden to me, and I have wished to die out of it, for I seem to be deceived and given over to a reprobate mind. If I attempt to look back, all seems to be a delusion. The joy that I have felt seems to be the joy of the stony ground hearer. The sweet seasons that I could once look back upon are all hid from my sight. Nothing is clear, nothing is decisive; all seems to be a blank. I appear to be altogether out of the secret; there is something, I fear, that I am not yet acquainted with, nor ever shall be. If I look into the Bible, every word seems against me. I tremble, and close the book, and conclude it is all over. If I see any of the saints, they appear cold towards me. This goes to my very heart. And strong temptations arise in my mind to take and drown myself out of the way. I wish I had never said anything

about religion, and feel determined never to open my mouth again to any one about it.

Now and then there is a cry, "Bring my soul out of prison. Lord, if I am wrong, set me right. If thou hast not begun the work, do begin it at once. Do thou reveal thyself to me. Give me one proof, one token, one evidence, one testimony; then I will honour, adore, and glorify thy name!" And blessed be his dear name, he does in his own time come and shine into my poor soul, and says, "I am thy light and thy salvation." O how my soul then goes out in praise, thanksgiving, and blessing to his dear name! All is right then. I can then say with dear Hart,

"I love the Lord with mind and heart,
His people, and his ways;
Envy, and pride, and lust depart;
And all his works I praise.
"Nothing but Jesus I esteem,
My soul is then sincere;
And every thing that's dear to him,
To me is also dear."

But I must conclude. May the Lord bless us with a tender conscience, which is a very rare thing to be met with now-a-days. I see, as I am in my daily vocation, things done by professors, and those who make a great noise about a consistent walk too, which astonish me. Once more I say, may the Lord give us a tender conscience! Amen.

B————, August 4th, 1847.

H. M.

A SINNER SAVED BY GRACE.

My Dear Friend,—

* * * * *

I have a deal of in and out work in soul matters, and still find a deal of up-hill work in the ministry; but now and then see and feel there is a needs-be for it all, and thank, praise, and bless the Lord from my very soul that things are as they are; yea, I do know what it is at times to say, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, I have a goodly heritage." The dear Lord is very tender and merciful to such a worthless old sinner. He knows my many infirmities, and remembers I am but a particle of dust. I am quite overcome at times with his tender mercies and loving-kindnesses towards such an out of the way wretch; for I am not a common sinner. O the depth of wickedness that is in my heart! It is truly desperately wicked.

But, bless the Lord, grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ. I never felt the need of the truth in the power of it as I do now; and I never felt it more sweet, suitable, and delightful than now. O what delight to find his sweet words and eat them! It is truly the rejoicing of my soul. But I find it sad work when I am left alone. My soul does know that I can

do nothing without him. I am the poorest fool that ever was upon this earth without Jesus; which makes me to beg from day to day that he will not leave me to myself, to the world, or the devil. And bless his dear name, he now and then gives me a blessed token for good, and that he hears my poor cries.

The Lord bless you, with Mrs. —, and your dear little ones, is the prayer of a poor old sinner saved by grace,

Trowbridge, Jan. 5, 1848.

J. W.

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS BY THE LATE
W. HUNTINGTON.—Nos. IV. AND V.

My dear and dearly-beloved Brother in Christ, — My spirit rejoiced and my heart was glad, when I saw the goodness of the Lord to you.

It is heartless praying when we see no return of prayer. Your family and Mr. D.'s have long been daily set before me when I have in private been calling upon the Lord; and I generally think when the Lord brings the poor man of Macedonia and sets him before Paul, that he intends good to him, as it is to excite pity, compassion, and an earnest desire after his salvation. Paul, speaking to the Gentiles, tells them they had received mercy through the Jews' unbelief, and that the Jews should receive mercy through the mercy of the Gentiles.

I am fully persuaded thou hast crossed the line, the covenant line and the line of judgment, and art measured by one full line to keep alive. Fear, hope, and expectation have brought thee over and into the bond of the covenant; some of the good things in the covenant, which are promised to us, are found in thee; and my soul blesses the Lord for it, for God hath disposed your hearts to be kind to me; and God grant that by the instrumentality of his poor servant, he may sow spiritual blessings to you as you have sowed so many carnal things to me. I cannot help saying with Paul, "God be merciful to Onesiphorus, who oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; but when he was at Rome sought me out and found me. and in how many things he ministered unto me," &c. &c. God for ever bless thee.

Ever yours in Christ Jesus,

W. H., S. S.

My dear Friend, — The gentleman who promised £500, and who paid £300, did last week remit the £200, which I sent to Mr. B.—

Those who seek the face of Zion's King, and who abide by that family of which he is the Head, are accounted among the friends who, with God's neighbours, the angels, do rejoice with Christ over every penitent sinner, or lost sheep, when sought, found, and brought to the fold. I therefore enclose two artless scraps of one who seems to be passing out of obscurity, and just verging out of the miry clay. How secretly does the great work of God move on

amongst us! The greatest transaction God ever performed is perfected in the hearts of individuals; one is taken and the other left, when the next-door neighbour knows nothing of it; so true is it, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; for behold the kingdom of God is within you." The devil's whole empire has but four pillars to support it—sin, death, hatred to God, and unbelief. God's kingdom stands in grace, life, love, and faith; and these last shall reign over the former.

Tender my love to your spouse, and accept the same from
Yours most truly,

W. H., S. S.

[The friend who has been so kind as to favour us with a series of Huntington's Unpublished Letters, has written to us to assure us that our suspicions of the previous publication of one of them were quite unfounded. He says, "I think I may say I am confident it has never been before published, as I have every reason to believe they were never in any person's hands but mine and the friend's to whom they were addressed."

We are sorry, therefore, to have expressed any doubt upon the subject; but certain expressions in it and its general drift were so similar to what we have read in Huntington's published letters, that we could hardly persuade ourselves we had not before read it.

This, however, we think may be easily explained by what has often happened to ourselves, and probably to most of our correspondents. When our mind has been full of a subject, and we have written to two friends perhaps on the same day, our pen has run on in almost the same drift to both, and the same or similar expressions have been used to each almost unintentionally.

Huntington did not write his letters for publication; and had not, like a hypocrite, two different tales for two different persons.—Eds.]

UNTO GOD THE LORD BELONG THE ISSUES FROM DEATH.

My dear Friend and Brother in the Lord,—Were not salvation wholly of grace, from beginning to end, my hope would immediately give up the ghost, and despair would open like a gulph, and swallow me up, to howl beneath the righteous vengeance of a just and holy God. But, blessed be God, there is a way for feelingly perishing sinners, that are halt, withered, and blind, that can neither walk, think, nor see without the help of the God of Israel, having proved all other help vain. They have tried nitre and much soap to cleanse the Ethiopian a little; but after much labour and sorrow, his swarthy skin has appeared doubly black, and the righteousness of God, revealed in the law, swallowing up legal hope, stops the mouth, so that the poor soul falls down by the force of conviction of his just deserts, and, in the anguish of his spirit, smites upon his breast and groans forth, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Then at this important moment, this never to be forgotten time, when the world and all that is therein were in his soul's feeling not worth a thought, what would not a man give in exchange for his soul? How willing is the soul to be saved in the Lord's way in this day of the Lord's power! Oh! beloved, the time seems

fresh on my spirit, when I sank in feeling I know not whither, but it seemed beyond all recovery; but in this state there came from my heart an inexpressible groan for mercy, and in a moment I felt a power that raised me up, and despair fled. It seemed to me that I was like a man that had sunk in the sea to a tremendous depth but could find no bottom, but by an invisible hand his head was raised above water, and he found some sort of standing for his feet. And in this state, these words powerfully entered my heart: "To God the Lord belong all the issues of death." The sweet distilling power, the softening and melting glow that covered my soul was inexpressible; it did so sweetly appear to me that all the issues from death belonged to the Lord, the blessing appeared so great, the foundation so impregnable, that I was filled "with joy and peace in believing."

How sweet and full did the word of God appear! I found it sweet to my taste. It opened and broke forth like golden mines, and the riches found caused me to rejoice as one that had taken great spoil; and like the Israelites, I sang the Lord's song on viewing my enemies drowning in the Red Sea. But alas! alas! the wilderness! the wilderness! what murmuring, what fretfulness, what idolatry, what wandering, and wretched rebellion have oozed out of my heart since then! As light, and dew, and power, were withheld in the means and ways of the Lord's appointing, how peevish and fretful I grew, and then hard thoughts, and wretched rebellion followed, which made me plunge and kick like a wild bull in a net! I did not like the yoke; labour was not pleasant to me; feasting was pleasant. But exercise is needful and profitable both for health and growth. We must plough with Samson's heifer to find out the riddle. Lounging at ease, and having all things at their fingers' end (as they think) suits a bastard, but it does not suit indigent beggars. "There is much fruit in the tillage of the poor, and there is that which is destroyed for lack of judgment," so that the senses must be exercised to discern both good and evil. There must be a leading about to prove what is in the heart to humble us, and render the salvation of the Lord sweet and suitable. But O what fools! and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have written! that we are wholly ruined, the whole head sick and heart faint, so as to be nothing from head to foot but rottenness.

What search we make, and schemes we try, (at least I speak for myself,) to find or hew out a cistern to hold a little water to make use of at our pleasure! but after all our labour to please ourselves, the wind of the Lord comes, a wind from the wilderness, and dries up all the pleasant vessels, blasts all the prospects, and we find "instead of a girdle, a rent; instead of a sweet smell, a stink; and instead of well-set hair, baldness; and instead of a stomacher, a girding of sack-cloth; and burning instead of beauty." And this discipline from the Lord, I am persuaded from heart-feeling, is needful to stop and curb the imperious whorish woman in her lewd practices; which figure appears to me to show the proneness and bent of the heart to backslide. But what a long-suffering and

gracious God is our God, in so bearing with our manners, and so correcting us as to preserve us from perishing in the evil! What debtors we are! what debtors we are to sovereign, immutable grace!

“Were not thy grace as firm as free,
Thou soon wouldst take it, Lord, from me.”

Here, then, is my hope; if this can alter, I must fall. And sometimes I feel my anchorage so, that neither floods of ungodliness nor winds of temptation can beat me from it; and then, again, I find every blast shakes me like a feather in the wind, so that I cannot boast of anything as though I had not received it. I find that I have nothing good to use at my pleasure;

“All comes, and lasts, and ends,
As doth please my heavenly Friend.”

“Well,” say some, “if that is the case, why so restless at times about matters? you may as well be quiet.” Necessity will not let me be quiet. Sin which is my enemy plagues me, and my best Friend standing aloof grieves me, so that I cannot cease crying for help any more than an oppressed child. However, “the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him,” and none others can understand it, for “if you bray a fool in a mortar, or beat him with a pestle, yet will his foolishness not depart from him.” He may have the light of Balaam, the wisdom of Ahitophel, the zeal of Jehu, and walk in company with the wise like Judas, yet sink to hell at last with all his outward privileges.

Remember me to the whole of the brethren; greet them by name; and may the living God preserve and keep you a separate people, that you may in no way say a confederacy with whom the world says a confederacy.

Yours affectionately in truth,

C——, October 18th, 1846.

J. K.

POETRY.

LINES TO A FRIEND, BY THE LATE W. GADSBY.

Dear Friend,—Allow me to address
One who appears in deep distress,
But seems in measure to depart
From Him who can true strength impart.

In trouble where should mourners go
But unto Him who feels their woe,
And there unbosom all their mind?
For he will prove divinely kind.

Tell him the whole of your complaint,
And pray that he will wisdom grant,
And give you prudence, strength, and grace,
His will in all things to embrace.

Don't for one moment start aside
From his right rules, whate'er betide.

Confide in him, there cast your care;
And in the end he will appear.

What! faint and die when troubles come,
While Jesus lives, your living home!
Christ is your rest, and God, and guide,
And he will every good provide.

Read Job the fourth, fifth verse, and say,
"Is this my case? Lord, guide my way;
Lead me by faith to thy dear breast,
And set my troubled mind at rest."

My Jesus cannot, will not err,
And you should all his will prefer,
Prostrate at his dear feet, and there
Endeavour to leave all thy care.

Rebellion will increase thy woe,
And make thee from thy Helper go,
And draw thee where no help is found,
But all is dark and barren ground.

God help thee to be much in prayer;
Give thee a will his will to bear,
And make thee heartfully submit
To what thy Jesus sees most fit.

That this may be thy real case,
And Jesus show his smiling face,
And set thee at true liberty,
Prays thy real friend,

Manchester, July 27, 1842.

WILLIAM GADSBY.

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

There is not one word in all the book of God, if rightly understood, against a sensible sinner that feels the plague of his heart, and who is willing to be saved in God's own way.—*Huntington*.

There goes a rumour that I am to be banished; and let it come, if God so will. The other side of the sea is my Father's ground as well as this side.—*Rutherford*.

"I know myself to be a child of God and an heir of glory," said Joseph Hart on his death-bed; adding, "Judas was lost that the Scripture might be fulfilled, but the Scripture would not be fulfilled if I were not saved."

It is usual now-a-days to *offer* the gospel to all men, and to tell them that if they will only believe they will be elected. But the truth is, God's people, in God's own time, believe because they *are* elected, and are not elected because they believe.

Luther had this passage in his last will and testament: "Lord God, I thank thee for that thou hast been pleased to make me a poor and indigent man upon earth. I have neither house, nor land, nor money to leave behind me. Those whom thou hast given me, wife and children, I now restore to thee. Lord, nourish, teach, and preserve them, as thou hast me."

It is a peculiar expression where the apostle prays that they might "know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." (Eph. iii. 19.) We may know experimentally that which, we cannot know comprehensively. We may know, in its power and effects, that which we cannot comprehend in its nature and depths. A weary person may receive refreshment from a spring, who cannot fathom the depth of the ocean from which it proceeds.—*Owen*.

Does it not seem like a contradiction, when the apostle prays that the Ephesians might "comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to *know* the love of Christ which *passeth knowledge*," &c.? How can they know that which passeth knowledge? Why, look at the prayer. It is that they may know, that they may comprehend, *with all saints*, what is the breadth, &c. That is, that they may have the saints' share of that blessed knowledge; that their souls may be full of it.—*Gadsby*.

I am servant to the great Physician. I visit my master's patients, inquire after their health, lay their various cases before him, carry out his medicines, and am an eye, ear, and living witness of an innumerable number of wonderful cures, even the leprosy, the scurvy, the plague of the heart, and plague of the head. I attend quickenings, soul-labour, and soul-travail. I have been at the birth of the new man and the death of the old one. I have been a wet and dry nurse. I have attended miscarrying wombs, and untimely fruit like a snail, that has never seen light. I have made caudle for others when I have wanted it myself. I have given suck to strangers, and at times envied every drop they have swallowed down. I have been permitted to carry leaves from the tree of life, and gather fruit from the same every month, week, and hour, and sometimes all day long. I have been permitted to carry my Master's robe from place to place, among the sick, and as many as have touched it have been made perfectly whole.—*Huntington*.

The Holy Scriptures are full of divine gifts and virtues. The books of the heathen taught nothing of faith, hope, and love; nay, they knew nothing at all of the same. Their books aimed only at that which was present, at that which, with natural will and understanding, a human creature was able to comprehend and take hold of; but to trust in God and to hope in the Lord, nothing was written thereof in their books. In the Psalms and in Job we may see and find how those two books do treat and handle of faith, of hope, of patience, and prayer. To be short, the Holy Scriptures are the best and highest book of God, full of comfort in all manner of trials and temptations, for it teacheth of faith, hope, and love, far otherwise than by human reason and understanding can be comprehended. And, in times of troubles and vexations, it teacheth how these virtues should light and shine. It teacheth also that, after this poor and miserable life, there is another which is eternal and everlasting.—*Luther*.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.”—Matt. v. 6.

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”—2 Tim. i. 9.

“The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.”—Rom. xi. 7.

“If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”—Acts vii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

No. 147. MARCH, 1848. VOL. XIV.

THE SWORD OF JUSTICE AWAKENED AGAINST
GOD'S FELLOW.

PART OF A SERMON BY RALPH ERSKINE, PREACHED BEFORE THE
ORDINANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, JULY 3, 1720.

(Continued from page 47.)

III. The third thing was, to show in what manner this sword did awake against Christ; and what is imported in the phrase, “Awake, O sword.” How the sword did awake against Christ has been partly declared already in the account of the sword itself. However, it may a little further appear in the import of this wonderful call, “Awake, O sword,” &c.

1. It imports as if the sword had been sleeping, and now must awake against him. Christ having no sin of his own to answer for, the sword of justice had nothing to lay to his charge, and so it was sleeping, as it were, with respect to him, having nothing to say against him, he being the infinitely holy God in himself, until he had made the bargain with his Father to become our Surety and Cautioner; and whenever he became sin for us, and took on him our debt, then justice had a right to pursue him. Therefore, “Awake, O sword.”

2. “Awake, O sword.” It imports, that not only while the council of peace was held between the Father and the Son did justice delay the execution, (though Christ was “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” in the decree and counsel of God,) but that, after this glorious transaction, the sword designed

against the Son of God had long slumbered. The sword had slumbered above four thousand years after Adam's fall; the Lamb was not slain for all that time, but only in dark typical representations of his death; but now he must be actually slain. Therefore, "Awake, O sword." God was now speaking of the day of Christ, the gospel-day, in the first verse of the chapter where our text lies, saying, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." Now, how shall this fountain be opened? Why, the sword of justice must pierce the side and heart of the Son of God, and so open a fountain of cleansing blood. Therefore, when the decree breaks forth, he says, "Awake, O sword."

3. "Awake, O sword." It imports that the sword of justice did not rashly smite the Man that is God's Fellow. A man in his sleep, or half sleeping, may give a rash unadvised stroke to his fellow; but before God gave the stroke to the Man that is his Fellow, he did awake his justice, as it were, out of sleep, and proceeded upon the matur'est deliberation: "Awake, O sword." It was no unadvised stroke that Christ got by the sword of justice; it was the fruit of a glorious transaction. Neither did the sword strike him without a warrant; but by particular orders from the Judge of all, it was warranted to brandish itself against him. "Awake, O sword."

4. It imports that justice was lively and vigorous in executing the vengeance due upon our Surety for our sin. Justice did not give him a sleepy, lazy, drowsy blow, but a strong, lively, awakened blow; as it is said in another case: "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord;" (Isaiah li. 9;) so, "Awake, O sword," put on strength. Well, justice arises, as it were, like one out of sleep, puts on its clothes of vengeance and armour of power, rallies its forces, goes forth with warlike robes, and attacks the Man that is God's Fellow with all its force; and acts, like itself, with impartial equity, without sparing our Surety because of his quality: "God spared not his own Son." (Rom. viii. 32.) "Awake, O sword."

5. "Awake, O sword." It imports the great concern and earnestness that was in God's heart to have his justice satisfied. "Awake, O sword." God speaks here with affectionate concern: "O, sword! O justice! thou must be honoured, glorified, and satisfied, one way or other; and seeing I have proposed to my eternal Son to bear the stroke of vengeance in the room of my elect sinners, and seeing he has undertaken it, my heart is set upon the accomplishment of this glorious work; my justice is one of the pearls of my crown. I will not show mercy to the detriment of my justice. A sacrifice I must have; therefore, 'Awake, O sword.'"

6. I think it imports not only God's concern to have his justice satisfied in this way, but his great delight in the satisfaction; "Awake, O sword, against the Man that is my Fellow." With what infinite pleasure and satisfaction does the sword of justice give the bloody stroke to this glorious Person: "It pleased the Lord to

bruise him, and to put him to grief." (Isaiah liii. 10.) Why, how is this consistent with the ineffable love he had to his eternally beloved? Yes, most consistent; for the Father loved the Son in dying, and for dying: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again." (John x. 17.) He loved his Son for this very act of obedience which he yielded to him. Christ's obedience to the death was the highest and most acceptable worship and service to God that ever was or ever will be; it is a sacrifice of such a sweet smell, that it drowned the stench of all the sins of an elect world; a sacrifice more pleasing to God than all their sins were displeasing; and, therefore, with infinite pleasure and satisfaction, he says, "Awake, O sword." This leads me to,

IV. The fourth thing proposed: What special hand Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts, had in making this awful sword to awake against this glorious Person. "Awake, O sword, saith the Lord of Hosts." It was the Lord of Hosts, the eternal Father of this eternal Son, that mustered the hosts of vengeance against him, and had the main and principal hand in Christ's sufferings, which we are to commemorate this day. Jehovah's hand was supreme in this business, and that in these four respects:

1. It was Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts, that determined all beforehand, and agreed with his Son for that effect. It was concluded in the counsel of God what he should suffer, what should be the price that Jehovah would have, and the sacrifice he would accept of from his hands. It was not the Jews, nor the scribes and Pharisees, nor Pilate, but principally it was the Lord's doing, and the accomplishment of his eternal counsel. "Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." (Acts iv. 27, 28.) In all they were doing they did nothing but what was carved out before in the eternal counsel of God; and therefore Peter says, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." (Acts ii. 23.)

2. As he, the great Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts, determined that the sword should awake against him, so he prepared the subject capable to receive the stroke of justice's sword: "A body hast thou prepared me." (Heb. x. 5.) He gave him a nature, a soul and a body capable of suffering. The stroke of justice fell only upon the Man Christ, upon his human nature. Though the dignity of his divine Person did infinitely enhance the merit of his sufferings, yet his divine Person, his divine nature, was never reached, nor reachable, by the sword of justice. The eternal Word was untangible and incapable of suffering till the "Word was made flesh." Now this flesh, this human nature, God prepared.

3. It was Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts, that ordered and over-ruled all his sufferings, when it came to the execution of his ancient decree. He who governs all the counsels, thoughts, and

actions of men, did, in a special manner, govern and overrule the sufferings of the Mediator. Though wicked men were following their own designs, and were stirred up and acted upon by the devil, who is said to have put it into the heart of Judas to betray Christ, yet God had the ordering of all who should betray him, what death he should die, how he should be pierced, and yet not a bone of him be broken.

4. It was Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts, that had an active hand in reaching the stroke to Christ. He was the chief party that pursued Christ with the sword of justice in his hand: "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he put him to grief." It was he that was exacting the elect's debt of him; and therefore Christ looked over Pilate and Herod, and all the wicked instruments used in this work, as of no consideration in this matter; he looked over them all to the Lord Jehovah his Father, and says to the chief of them, Pilate, that cowardly self-condemned judge, "Thou couldst have no power over me, except it were given thee from above." It was this interest that his Father had in his sufferings that made him say, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (John xviii. 11.) His Father pursued him as Cautioner in our room; and to his Father he cries when the sword was running through his heart, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He spared not his own Son when he cried, but would have him drink out the bitter cup to the bottom. "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the Man that is my Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts; smite the Shepherd." This message comes from him, and he gave the sword a charge, and orders it to smite him. It was this, more than the whips, the thorns, the nails, and the spear, that made him cry out. Another and a higher hand brought his soul to more bitterness than all the sufferings endured from men. Thus his soul was crucified more than his body, and his heart had sharper nails to pierce it than his hands and feet.

V. The fifth thing, namely, The reasons of the doctrine, why the Lord of Hosts ordered the sword of justice to awake against his Shepherd, the Man that is his Fellow? Surely it was necessary that the sword should awake against him: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" (Luke xxiv. 26,) says our Lord himself. However innocent he was in himself, yet our sins, which were laid upon him, deserved to be thus treated; and therefore he, as our Surety, who had the guilt of the world lying upon him, says, "O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my wickedness is not hid from thee." (Psalm lxix. 5.) These are the words of Christ, of whom David was a type. He had enough of sin imputatively, and our sins had never been expiated, our state never secured, justice never satisfied, the bond never cancelled, if the sword had not awaked against him. Ought he not, then, to have suffered the stroke of the sword? Yea, he gave his oath for it to his Father from eternity; and all the promises, prophecies, types, and sacrifices of

old pointed out this. God was ready to come down with fury in his heart, and red hot thunderbolts in his hand, to sink all mankind to hell. And ought not Christ to suffer and interpose? Yea, glory to God, he did! But more particularly.

1. The Lord of Hosts, the Rector of the universe, designed by this method to rectify what was out of course by the sin of man, and to bring all things to rights. By the fall, the universal frame suffered a convulsion; the covenant of works was broken; the devil was reigning and raging in the earth; and all the honour of God's workmanship in the first creation was like to be lost. Now, the supreme Rector comes with the sword of justice to rectify these disorders, by drenching his sword in the blood of his eternal Son. Was the covenant of works broken? Behold here the condition of it fulfilled, by his active and passive obedience; yea, both the two covenants, of works and of grace were at once fulfilled in his obedience to the death; this is the proper condition of each of these covenants. Was the devil reigning and raging on the earth? Behold, by this blow of justice's sword given to Christ, the devil and all our spiritual enemies are destroyed: "For this cause was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." Hence, when Christ is lifted up upon the cross, receiving the stroke of justice's sword, it is said, "Now is the judgment of this world; now is the prince of this world cast out." (John xii. 31.) "By death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil." By the bruise of his heel, his human nature, he broke the serpent's head and his power. Again: was all the honour and beauty of God's workmanship like to be lost? Behold, the Man that is God's Fellow sustaining the stroke of justice's sword, restores all: "Then restored I that which I took not away." (Psalm lxxix. 4.) What was taken away? Why, the devil; Adam and Eve took away the glory due to God, the obedience due to the law, and the happiness that belonged to man in his first creation. "Well," says Christ, "it is much to bring them all back again; but I will do it, though I took them not away. I will restore to man his happiness; he has lost the image of God, I will restore it in regeneration; he has lost the fellowship of God, I will restore it, being God's Fellow. I will bring them to fellowship with God, by sustaining the stroke of the sword which they should have sustained for ever. I will restore to the law its due obedience; yea, I will magnify the law and make it honourable by my obedience to it, insomuch that the Lord of Hosts shall 'be well pleased for my righteousness' sake; and so I will restore to God the honour and glory that he lost by the sin of man." And this leads to the

2. Reason why the Lord of Hosts made the sword of justice to awake and smite his Shepherd, the Man that is his Fellow. Why? That thus he might get all his divine attributes glorified to the highest. "Glory to God in the highest!" was the song of angels, when he appeared in our nature to receive this awful stroke. God's honour was not more impaired and embezzled by the sin of man than it was restored and repaired by the death of Christ. If

all mankind, and all the angels with them, had fallen a sacrifice to the sword of divine justice, it could not have repaired the honour of God for one sin; though they had all been offered up in one whole burnt-offering, it could not have satisfied infinite justice; yea, though they had all been damned in hell to all eternity, justice could never have got full satisfaction. But here is justice glorified to the highest: "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified;" and at the same time vindicated the spotless holiness and righteousness of God, that it may be known that God is holy and just, who will needs avenge sin in his own Son, the holy and innocent Cautioner, when he interposes in the sinner's room. This is the declared design of God's awakening the sword of justice against Christ: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation for sin, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." (Rom. iii. 25, 26.) If God had exacted the satisfaction of the sinners themselves by sending them to hell, it might have declared his justice and righteousness much; but here it is more gloriously declared, and glorified to the highest; for, if we consider Christ in himself, and the elect in themselves, his death and sufferings are more than if all the elect had suffered eternally in hell. Here are mercy and free grace glorified to the highest, while the sinner is liberated and not put to pay the debt in his own person. Here is divine power glorified to the highest in the crucifying of Christ, whom the power of God supported under that load of wrath that would have crushed ten thousand worlds. Here is wisdom glorified to the highest. The manifold wisdom of God, that there should be two natures yet but one Person; that mercy should be fully magnified, and yet justice fully satisfied; that sin should be punished, and yet the sinner unpunished; that the sinner should escape, and yet God should take vengeance upon sin. O the wisdom of God in a mystery!

3. Reason why the Lord of Hosts ordered the sword of justice to awake and smite the Shepherd, the Man that is his Fellow. It was even for the honour of the Shepherd and the glory of the Man his Fellow. God designed that for his suffering of death he should be "crowned with glory and honour." (Heb. ii. 9.) That for his humbling himself, and becoming obedient unto death, he should be "highly exalted above all, and have a name above every name." (Phil. ii. 9.) That for drinking of the brook in the way, he should lift up his head; that after he had drunk of the brook of divine wrath in our room, he should lift up his head above all principalities and powers, and have all power in heaven and earth given to him, and a number of elect to praise him for ever. O it is a wonderful thing to think what he gave and what he got! What gave he? His body, his soul, his blood, his life. What got he? Even some of the black, ugly race of Adam to embrace him. He makes his soul an offering for sin, and he "sees his seed;" he "sees the travail of his soul, and is satisfied." He thinks all his pains well bestowed when he gets the bride in his

arms. O here is love! Behold incarnate love, bleeding love, dying love! Shall not this glorious Lover be exalted of God for ever, and exalted by all the redeemed with the highest praises, for opening his breast to receive the wound of the awakened sword of justice? Yea, more; the song will be, "Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain! Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." And this leads to the

4. And last reason why the sword of justice was ordered to awake and smite the Shepherd, the Man that is God's Fellow; namely—that a fountain of blood might be opened for the benefit of the sheep. This Shepherd was smitten with the sword of justice, that the stroke might open a fountain for the watering of the sheep. "There shall be a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness." (Zech. xiii. 1.) A fountain for watering and washing of the sheep. And how is it to be opened? Even with the sword of justice: "Awake, O sword, against the Man my Fellow."

(*To be continued.*)

GOD FAITHFUL TO HIS PROMISES; BEING OUR ONLY REFUGE IN DARK AND TRYING TIMES, OR IN AFFLICTIVE PROVIDENCES.

BY JOHN RUSK.

(*Continued from page 38.*)

Again. At these seasons the Bible is a sealed book. Our evidences are all gone, and "we see not our signs." So also as regards prayer; we have no testimony that God hears us. The preaching of the word, that we once delighted in, now is burdensome, and we often *think*, as some *say*, "What a weariness it is!" We wish the sermon was over; and if the preacher make a mistake we are sure to find it out; for love waxeth cold, and it is only love that can cover a multitude of sins. We now shun God's people whom we once loved; and we who used to find such a spring in our hearts, now feel it quite shut up, and are "a fountain sealed." Our old enemy comes and tells us it was but a gift, which is to be taken from the servant; that we were raised up as instruments of good to others, but now the time is come that it shall be taken away even that which we have; and he confirms it by God's word: "For a prating fool shall fall;" and he says, "You see what a poor wretch you are; you have cried to God over and over again for his hand to appear for you, but he does not. Therefore," says Satan, "it is a false confidence, and I can prove it; for confidence in an unfaithful man in the time of trouble is like a broken tooth, or a foot out of joint; it is a tooth that cannot chew the bread of life, as you see you cannot, and it is a foot that cannot walk to God, which is your case, and therefore all your faith is presumption; for the talk of the lip tendeth only to penury, and you see you get poorer and poorer; you only boasted

to get a name and to cut a figure before folks; and he that exalteth himself shall be abased."

Now all this we really believe, and expect that God will make us public examples for a warning to others. I myself have trembled at the accounts which Jude and Peter have given of hypocrites, and likewise had such very dreadful dreams that I have thought they were warnings from God against me. Now these things try our trust; but after this,

"Jesus appears, disproves the lie,
And kindly makes it o'er again."

But, again. This trust is not confined to any particular time of our life; neither to youth, middle age, nor old age; nor yet to any part of experience; for there can be no part of our life in which we shall not stand in need of this trust; and therefore David says, "Trust in him at all times."

If I am called by grace in my youth, O how my old companions will try to get me back again to them! They will try hard, by frowns and flatteries, to make me give it all up. And likewise if my parents are carnal people, or moral people, (what is generally called moral, although there is not one grain of real morality in them,) how they will labour to make me relinquish this trusting in God! David says that father and mother forsook him, but the Lord took him up. Therefore trust in him at all times.

Again. The pleasures of this world, plays, novels, romances, jest books, fairs, gambling, and various societies,—all these the devil will stir up in order to bring us back to his service; and therefore Paul says, "Flee also youthful lusts; but follow righteousness, godliness, faith," &c. This is a time for trust, by pleading the promises God has made, and watching and waiting till he is pleased to hear our prayer; also to turn our petitions where there is the most danger, and never give it up; for to this end Christ spake a parable, "that men ought always to pray and not faint," and the answer is sure to come, for "in due time we shall reap if we faint not." And here David could boast, "For thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my trust from my youth." (Psalm lxxi. 5.) Nay, he goes back to his first coming into the world, "Thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels." And feeling his heart warm, he says, "My praise shall be continually of thee." And how very sweet it is to look back, when old, and see that the Lord has been with us from our very cradle, to what it must be to think of living thirty or forty years in the service of the devil! "Trust in him at all times."

Again. If called in riper years, what a long score there is against us; what heavy work; the weight of all our sins, which are of a dreadful nature; the bondage of broken laws; and the very strong hold Satan has of us! Still, where must we trust, or to whom must we look but to the Lord? "He is a strong hold in the day of trouble, and knows (with approbation) them that trust in him." It will not do to go to the best earthly friend. "Trust ye not in a friend" Nor are we to put confidence in a guide, nor yet

in ourselves; for then we are fools. "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." So that it will not do to trust in Christ as man. Seeing this is the case, then, trust in him at all times. Are your sins a burden? Trust in him for pardon, and when pardoned, trust in him to keep your conscience tender; and if delivered from bondage, trust in him to keep you in the liberty of God's people; and from a light and trifling spirit. Should faith get low, trust in him to increase it; and if strong, to keep you from pride and presumption. Are you poor in this world? Go on trusting in him, making use of lawful means, and looking through all means to him, knowing the insufficiency of them all in and of themselves; and if no means can be used, (such as people use in general,) then cry, groan, pray, watch, wait, and trust to the promise, for that is, "I will call for the corn, the oil, the wine, the wool, and the flax, and lay no famine upon you;" but remember, he will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do these things for them. He loves importunity. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

If you can go in a formal way to God, it shows there is little or no sense of want; but when you are pinched to the uttermost, and the Spirit helps your infirmities, you will take no denial. It is said of our dear Lord, that "being in an agony he prayed the more earnestly." Now, this is trust; and it appears to me that the prophet Habakkuk was made to know this trust from painful experience, for he prayed a good while before the Lord answered him. "How long, O Lord, shall I cry unto thee and thou wilt not hear, even cry out unto thee of violence and thou wilt not save?" (Habakkuk i. 2.) And then he tells you what he wanted to be saved from,—iniquity, grievance, strife, contention, wrong judgment, &c.; but instead of God answering him in the removing of them, he suffered them to go on worse and worse, and the prophet's faith was a little encouraged (though it was an answer by terrible things in righteousness) against them. "We shall not die; thou hast ordained them for judgment, thou hast established them for correction." Yet, after this, his faith (through heavy trial) seems discouraged, and he looked for reproof; but instead of the reproof being for him it was for the wicked, and the answer was, "The just shall live by faith." He was then quite resigned. "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him." But after all, he gives up the flesh and confidence in it altogether: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vine, the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stall, (then, Habakkuk, all is over, and you will not trust any more. "O yes, I will, and that more than ever I did,) yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord is my strength."

I have laughed with joy while writing this, to think that these six things should be all gone, and violence, wrong judgment, iniquity, strife, contention, and grievance, come in their room, which are six dreadful things; and yet to think he should rejoice

in the God of his salvation. The Lord give me as strong a faith as the prophet. Therefore trust in him at all times, in youth, middle age, old age, in all afflictions, trials, oppositions, cross providences, and knotty experiences; for he hath said he will "save them that trust in him." And I think we may see this trusting in the Lord all through Scripture. Abraham went out not knowing whither he went; then did he trust in the Lord to lead him, for he did not know where he was going; and you may see how lightly he valued the world, in his giving the best part (according to reason) to Lot; but directly after he gave it up, it is said, "The Lord appeared to Abraham," and promised to give him the east, west, north, and south, and to make "his seed like the dust of the earth." After this, Abraham refused to take anything from the King of Sodom, lest the king should say he had made Abraham rich, and so rob God of the glory. Then the Lord appeared to him when he was ready to sink (most likely thinking his enemies would make a fresh attack) with fear: "Fear not, Abraham, I am thy shield; trust in me, I will protect you, and be your exceeding great reward." And thus he went on; and after this, how long was it before Isaac came? This was trust. And when he grew up, he was ordered to offer him up. And not only Abraham, but Isaac and Jacob. Moses also, when he had that great multitude ready to devour him, and nothing before his eyes but destruction, one promise was sufficient in the hand of faith: "I am that I am;" and it never turned up a blank, but always a prize; yet sometimes he suffered long before the Lord appeared. This is trust; not talking, but really doing or believing, and having faith tried to the uttermost. How long was David also tried by Saul and the rest of his enemies before he was fixed in the kingdom?

Show me one, if you can, in whom the promise ever failed. "Our fathers trusted in thee; they trusted, and thou didst deliver them; they cried unto thee, and were delivered; they trusted in thee, and were not confounded." (Psalm xxii. 4, 5.) To have a faithful God in old age, O here is a blessing! It is true, when young, we find it hard, as labouring people, to fight through this wretched world; but O! when arrived at seventy or eighty years of age, what should we do without our God, who has promised to carry us from the womb, and bear us from the belly; that to hoary hairs and old age he will carry, he will bear, and he will deliver? For he says, "I will never turn away from them to do them good." David prayed that God would not cast him off in old age; and God was true to his promise, for he did not. Again, in the hour of death this calls for trust. But why? I answer, Satan often comes in a dying hour to distress a child of God, and he will suggest, "Now here is death; what do you think of that? suppose God should leave you after all, suppose you should be disappointed, or deceived?" But after this the Lord appears, and then such a one cries out, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, (as the sting is gone,) I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me;" and as the end of

faith is to be the salvation of the soul, and as all such die in faith, and as those are blessed that die in the Lord, may this encourage us to trust in him in a dying hour.

But there is a question that naturally arises, which is this: How shall I know whether I have real trust in the Lord? I answer, By these six things:

First. By having the promise fulfilled in your experience of the forgiveness of sins. Now, all the time you labour and are heavy laden, you are in hopes that God will fulfil his promise, which is, "From all their filthiness, and all their idols, I will cleanse them." But when the desire is accomplished it is sweet to the soul. Then say you, "I trusted in him, and I know it is the right trust, because it brought pardon and peace into my conscience." Now this is called the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of sins, and you know the Lord says, "I will save him." He does not say, "I have saved him," but "I will save him." But why? "Because he trusteth in me." Then when salvation comes home to the heart, it is a right trust.

Secondly. You will find your mind in peace, quietness, and tranquillity, stayed on the Lord, satisfied with the goodness of your state, that your life here will be a life of faith, and at last a life of glory. "I will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on me, because (that man whose mind is stayed on me) he trusteth in me." Then says David, "My heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord."

Thirdly. You will know it by regeneration. Of his mercy he save^s us by the washing of regeneration. Also by the fear of the Lord, and by the quickening influences of God's Spirit: "His mercy is on them that fear him." "Let thy mercies come, O Lord, to thy servant, that I may live." You will be crowned with loving-kindness and tender mercies; and as this mercy never had a beginning, it being from everlasting in your behalf, so it shall be to everlasting. You, finding it so in your experience, will know it is the right trust. "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked, but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about." (Psalm xxxii. 10.) Thus you see that salvation enjoyed, the mind stayed and fixed, and the mercy of the Lord compassing you, prove your trust genuine.

Fourthly. You will never stick fast in any trouble, but God will always appear for you; for it is said, "The just shall come out of trouble;" and you must be just if the three things I have mentioned belong to you; for first we are *justified* by Christ's blood. There is pardon or salvation. Again: the mind is stayed, and the effect of *righteousness* is quietness. And again, mercy: "Merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come." Thus, you see, Isaiah calls the merciful men righteous men. David says, "The *righteous* cry

and the Lord heareth them, and delivereth them out of all their troubles." "The sons of Reuben and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, made war with the Hagarites; and they were helped against them, for they cried to God in the battle, and he was entreated of them because they put their trust in him." (1 Chron. v. 18—20.) This is the fourth way you may know whether your trust is real; for you will always get out of trouble, sooner or later.

Fifthly. You may know real trust from false in this one way, and that is, a despairing of the use of the means without God. Then let me explain myself, and that in the following way. I suppose you are poor in your circumstances; though you wish to use the means God has been pleased to appoint, yet your heart is not in them as it once was. "No," say you, "and I think it is laziness or idleness. But what is the cause?" say you. Why, I think God crosses us this way that we may not put the means in his place; and when we have suffered this way for a while, we learn the vanity of all human help, for "who is he that saith and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" Then you will act differently, and your eyes will be to the Lord alone; you will look through all means to him: for let a thing appear ever so fair, you dare not trust in it, for you have been so often deceived. Thus your eyes will be to the Lord. "But mine eyes are unto thee, O God the Lord, in thee is my trust." (Psalm cxli. 8.) And again: "As the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us."

Lastly. You will know real trust by having at times a very grateful heart, and you will say with David, "Blessed be the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war and my fingers to fight: my goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; who subdueth my people under me." (Psalm cxliv. 1, 2.) You will hate the thoughts of taking the least thing to yourself, but you will be tender of his honour.

I think that real trust lies in these six things; but there is one particular thing in the text that I wish not to pass over, and that is, "in the Lord;" but what is there in the Lord that I must trust for that will be sure to secure everything else? I answer, Life; I say, Life. Now this, Mr. Huntington says, is the greatest blessing; and this is hid. Paul says, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God;" and this was a free gift to us before the world began. God, that cannot lie, according to the promise of eternal life which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but this we know nothing about, till it is brought to us by divine revelation. "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life." Well then, this word of truth is preached, and "life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel."

(To be continued.)

IN THY LIGHT WE SEE LIGHT.

Dear Friend,—I had fully intended to drop you a line before now, but have been prevented hitherto.

Through mercy, I got home safe, and found family and friends all well. Bless the Lord for all his goodness towards such unworthy wretches! Indeed, everything short of hell is a mercy. O how sweet it is to watch the kind hand of a covenant God in the dispensations of his providence and grace! What is there in the world worth noticing besides this? Nothing; for everything else is vanity and vexation of spirit. Thanks be to our God that ever he has, in mercy to our poor souls, separated us from the rest of the world. O how my poor soul is melted at times under that sweet text, "Such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." Surely I can then exclaim, "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him."

My dear friend, I am daily proving that—all my help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth; and he is very dear and precious at times to my soul, yea, the chiefest among ten thousand, and the Altogether Lovely. But do not think my old man is any better; no, he is still enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither can be. I assure you sometimes there is dreadful uproar in the house raised up by him, till I wonder what the end will be. I am then again brought to cry to my old Friend that sticketh closer than a brother; and how indulgent he is to hear my poor cry and step forth for my deliverance, and cause my soul to sing again with blessed confidence, "Rejoice not against me, O my enemy, for when I fall I shall arise, and when I sit in darkness the Lord will be a light unto me." Yes, my friend, he is my light and my glory; it is in his light alone that I can see light, in his strength alone can I stand, by his drawing unction alone can I run after him; it is his love alone shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost that causeth my soul to run after him in love, praise, adoration, thanksgiving, and joy. Indeed, I can do nothing without him, and when in my right mind I want to do nothing without him. O that it may be my happiness to sit more at his dear feet and hear his gracious words, for here is peace, and no where else.

I hope the Lord has raised you up again, and is favouring you with sweet calmness of soul, resigning and committing all your cares into his hands, for I believe he careth for you. Never mind, dear friend, the roughness of the way; the end will make amends for all, for thus saith the Lord of Hosts, "I will surely do thee good in thy latter end."

I hope my friend W— is still feeling a need of the blessings of salvation. I must say you have been much on my mind at the throne of grace; and it is my earnest desire that the Lord will be with you for body and soul. The Lord has all in his hands. It is my earnest desire that the Lord will preserve friend W— with

a tender conscience in all things. O that God may keep him! They are well kept that God keeps. This I know by soul experience, for had not the Lord preserved me I should have long ago been a disgrace to his cause.

Give my kind love to Mr. V—. I believe the Lord is with him, and I have no doubt God will stand by him. Give my love to friend S—, and I hope the Lord is blessing him with much of his presence. My kind love to those friends where I dined with Mr. V—, with Mr. and Mrs. M—, and all inquiring friends. The Lord bless them, for I found the Lord with me among you at B—; and I do hope the Lord blessed the word, which is the greatest comfort of my soul in seeing the word of the Lord run and being glorified. I hope, if I should be spared till next spring, to pay you another visit; but that is if the Lord will. Bless his precious name! if we should never meet again in this vale of tears, we shall meet at home, and never part again.

That the Lord may bless you, is the prayer of my very soul.

Trowbridge, June 15th, 1825.

J. W.

A LETTER BY JOHN BERRIDGE.

[Mr. Thoraton had published the *Golden Treasury*, and sent a copy of it by the hand of Mr. Henry Venn to his friendly critic Mr. Berridge. This present was acknowledged in the following.]

Dear and honoured Sir,—I have just received your *Golden Treasury* by the hand of my dear brother of Yelling, and thank you kindly for the pretty little valuable present; it is much improved in its present dress. The Lord bless the work and the editor.

In May I began to itinerate after a five years' discontinuance through illness, and kept on, though with much feebleness, for two months, when I was seized with a smart attack of my old complaint. I am now, as the world accounts, miserable, but lying at Jesus' gate, and am reduced to a mere Sunday preacher. The Lord be praised that I am not wholly laid aside. What a fund of corruption is lodged in the human heart! Every stripe I receive, my Master's word tells me I have procured for myself. Lord, I own it; sanctify the rod, and make the furnace purge away my dross. I trust the Lord has taught me to hate sin, and to hunger after righteousness; yet I am often seeking after holiness in such a manner as stiffens my heart, brings a dry and lean soul, and my eyes lose the sight of Christ's salvation. This convinces me there is a mystery in the manner of obtaining sanctification that we are not soon acquainted with. We are apt to consider sanctification as a separate work from justification, following after it, and wholly independent of it; whereas they seem to be connected works, inseparable from each other, and resulting one from the other.

The clearer sight we get of Christ, and the sweeter views we have of our adoption, the more our hearts are filled with love, joy,

peace, and all the fruits of the Spirit,—which is sanctification. When Jesus gives a clear view of his dying love, he always accompanies that view with the graces of the Spirit. The heart is filled at the same time with pardon and holiness, with justification and sanctification; so that if we desire to be holy we must seek to be happy in the Saviour's love, must seek a clear evidence of our adoption, and labour to keep it clear. As our views of Christ are more cloudy and discouraging, our bosoms will be more barren of heavenly tempers. A man may be constitutionally meek as the lamb, constitutionally kind as the spaniel, constitutionally cheerful as the lark, and constitutionally modest as the owl—but these are not sanctification. No sweet, humble, heavenly tempers—no sanctifying graces are found but in the cross. Jesus says, "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life." Then he showeth how eternal life (which must comprise the whole of spiritual life) is obtained, by eating his flesh and drinking his blood, *i. e.*, by feeding on his atonement.

Thus all divine life and all the precious fruits of it—pardon, peace, and holiness, spring from the cross; and is not this intimated by John, when he says, "One of the soldiers pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water?" They did not follow one another, but came out together; the blood betokening pardon, the water sanctification. Carnal men make the water come out first, and the blood follow; they seek a little obedience first, and then hope to have the benefit of the blood. Professors often make the blood come first, and the water follow; that is, they seek first to be justified, and then to be sanctified. But I do believe experienced Christians find the blood and water flow together, get holiness by clear views of the cross, and find eternal life by feeding on the Saviour's flesh and blood. Was not a lamb sacrificed every morning and evening in the Jewish temple? And was not this intended to show that we must feed on Christ's atonement every day, and derive all our life of peace and holiness from his death? Upright people are often coming to me with complaints, and telling me that since they received pardon and have been seeking after sanctification (as a separate work) their hearts have become exceeding dry and barren. I ask them how they find their hearts when Jesus shows his dying love; they tell me, full of love, and peace, and heavenly tempers. Then I answer, Jesus hereby shows you that holiness as well as pardon is to be had from the blood of the cross.

Labour therefore to get your conscience sprinkled every day with the atoning blood, and sanctification will ensue of course; the blood and water flow together. When Jesus only gives a smile and seals some promise on the heart, though it be not the seal of pardon, it occasions a sweet transforming change in the soul; and all fancied sanctification which does not arise wholly from the blood of the cross is nothing better than Pharisaism; for when sanctification is considered as a separate work from justification, and wholly independent of it, by and by it is considered as a justifying work

itself, and men profess and preach they are first to be justified by the blood of Christ and then by their own obedience. Oh, dear sir, if we would be holy, we must get to the cross and dwell there; else, notwithstanding all our labour and diligence, and fasting and praying, and good works, we shall yet be void of real sanctification, destitute of those humble, sweet, and gracious tempers which accompany a clear view of the cross. But mere doctrinal knowledge will not give us this view; it only proceeds from a lively faith wrought in us by the Prince of life. A legal spirit helpeth forward our mistake in the matter of sanctification. We would fain divide the water from the blood; fain would separate sanctification from justification, that we may make a merit of it, as the foundry people* do; whereas, if they are inseparably connected, and both pardon and holiness spring from the blood of the cross, the root of merit is dug up thereby, and Christ is all in all.

Another thing confirms our mistake, which is, that all heavenly graces are called fruits of the Spirit. Hence we conclude that pardon must spring peculiarly from the blood of the cross, and holiness be a separate work of the Spirit; but though all gracious tempers are the Spirit's fruit, yet the fruit is bestowed at the foot of the cross; eternal life is found at Calvary, by eating the Saviour's flesh and drinking his blood.

In my pamphlet, *The World Unmasked*, I wrote something against what the world calls sincere obedience, and with a two-fold view: 1st. To expose that insincere obedience which is commonly cloaked under the name of sincere obedience, or doing what we can; 2ndly. To show that obedience, when it is sincere and the fruit of the Spirit, is no ground of merit or cause of justification. I thought no professor could misunderstand me; but in a letter just received from Mr. Fletcher, he writes thus: "What you have said about sincere obedience has touched the apple of God's eye, and is the very core of Antinomianism. You have done your best to disparage sincere obedience, and in a pamphlet ready for the press I have freely exposed what you have written." Then he cries out, in a declamatory style, "For God's sake, let us only speak against insincere obedience and pharisaical obedience." Indeed! I thought I had been writing against insincere obedience throughout the pamphlet, and that every one who had eyes must see it clearly; but I suppose that Mr. Fletcher's spectacles invert objects, and make people walk with their heads downwards. May the Lord Jesus bring and keep you and yours at the cross, to see and sing the wonders of redeeming love, till you are called up higher, to sing eternal praise with all his saints.

Grace, mercy, and peace be with you, and with your much obliged and affectionate servant,

J. BERRIDGE.

* The followers of John Wesley; so called because he used to preach at first in a building which had been an iron foundry, in Moor-fields, London.

AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER BY THE LATE
W. J. BROOK.

I rejoiced in hearing from you. It is written in the prophet, "And a remnant shall come forth unto you, both sons and daughters, and ye shall be comforted when ye shall see their ways and their doings." (Ezek. xiv. 22.) And it is no small consolation to me in the house of my pilgrimage to hear that my children walk in the truth. I have no greater joy from anything in this world.

Your long silence often exercised my thoughts; but there was never one doubt among them concerning the genuineness of the work on your soul. God hath wrought in you. And what he does, he does for ever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all;" afflictions of body, of soul, and of spirit; but all these are intended to serve one great end—to realise to us this petition of Paul, "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." They are all intended to perfect us in him; for even the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings. But, you may say, he never was imperfect. How then could he be made perfect? He says himself, "I must walk to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." Now this perfection in him and in us lies in these things: it is said of him, that he increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man; and we are said to grow till the harvest. Whatever admits of increase is not perfect. Our Lord was not perfect while one trial remained to call forth greater grace than what went before. His faith, his hope, his love, his patience, his submission, his strength, all admitted of increase, as they were tried by successive sufferings, temptations, and afflictions. Thus you may find it at last. When he begs, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" here he was not perfect, but in the next breath he was: "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done;" here he learned obedience, and here obedience was displayed in perfection. "He was reviled, but he reviled not again;" here patience and meekness had their perfect work. He was deserted, and cries out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" In a little while he says, "Yet thou continuest holy;" here faith was exercised. These are deep things. I drop the hint to you; follow them up.

Paul talks of not being perfect yet; but he was perfect in his Covenant Head, though not in the grace that flows from Him. Hence James says, that by works Abraham's faith was made perfect; it was not perfect in him when he was justified, but it was when he offered up his son. Faith had in this the severest trial possible, and it could admit of nothing beyond it. "Let patience," James says, "have her perfect work;" and it is when our will is swallowed up in God's, to bear whatever he lays upon us, as Job's patience is spoken of, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and not receive evil?" and even at last he accepted all that God laid upon him and became

vile. Love admits of perfect love, which casteth out fear; this is what Peter means when he says, "The God of all grace, who hath called us to his eternal glory, after ye have suffered a while, make you perfect." They were perfect in the Surety, but not in grace. So Paul wishes the perfection of the church. And this is what our Lord calls "the full corn in the ear," ripened for harvest. Every saint and every hypocrite must be ripened; and when grace has attained to perfect faith, patience, hope, and love, the sickle is not far off. This is not the perfection of John Wesley, but it is of the Bible; and this is what I wish for my dear friends at Leicester, for this shall be crowned with perfect peace. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee."

Give my love to all friends. Ever yours,

W. J. BROOK.

THE FIERY TRIAL.

My very dear Friend in the Lord,—I would say, in the opening of my letter, may the Lord favour us with fellowship and communion with himself, and may what I have to communicate be blessed by him and lead us to adore his name together.

Your kind letter invites a communication, and therefore I venture to send you some account of my fiery trial. I will just notice, that it is now nearly twenty years since the Lord, by a powerful impression, produced a shock upon my feelings which made me tremble. I wondered at the unknown something that had befallen me. I felt something of guilt, and my conscience presaged that some judgment would befall me. I dreaded the consequence, concluding it would be death. This was the first time in all my life that I ever knew what a burdened spirit or sorrow of heart was. It was with some difficulty I reached my dwelling. Wondering and trembling, I went home, but said nothing to my wife about my feelings. From this time I think I may say the Lord constrained me, in a spiritual sense, to leave my father's house and the land of my nativity, and I began to inquire the way to Zion. Since then my life has been little else but a scene of trials, with the exception of some bright days, when I have forgotten my sorrow in the joys of the Lord's salvation. Many fires and many waters have I passed through; but one appears to have been reserved for me, which I may well call a "fiery trial," for hell itself appears to have been let loose to annoy me. It is as if the Lord had given commandment concerning Jacob, that his adversaries should be round about him, a fiery furnace to pass through. When body and spirit were scarcely kept together, I had to enter the field of warfare to wrestle with principalities and powers for life or death. Satan generally commenced his attack by throwing a fiery dart unawares, threatening life or senses, sometimes both; one of these darts would produce such an appalling slavish fear and horror, that it seemed as if the mind was completely under the power of death. As soon as I felt these attacks, I knew my exercise, and retired from the battle,

wrestling with strong crying and tears, until I have felt some help ministered; then my mind rose a little above the pressure of the powers of darkness, though wretched with sorrows and half dead with agonising fears, before I left this field of deep soul-tribulation.

I have been allowed to see the Man of Sorrows in Gethsemane and upon the cross, set before the eyes of my understanding. I felt as if present, as if upon the very spot, with adoring love, wondering joy, sorrowing sympathy. How have I blest his name for enduring the cross, and for his garden conflict! I tasted of the bitter cup, but he alone has drunk it up. In all the afflictions of his people he is still afflicted. Heaven has not altered his affections; he is Jesus Christ still, and can sympathise with pity, and sustain the poor worn-out sufferer, and make him more than conqueror. At certain times, when the enemy has been about to come down upon me, I have been enabled to hold the shield in his face, and thrust in the sword, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy, when I fall I shall arise;" and he has left the field.

But this has been a scene of captivity as well as warfare. I have had bonds, darkness, and confusion; hard things, wine of astonishment, the hand of the Lord upon me, the lamp of the Spirit searching me, and the word of God dissecting and separating past and present experience. At these times the ordinary springs of action and all carnal movements are judged by the standard of the divine glory. Pride and presumption of the flesh, idolatry of the affections, going after idols, conscience rising as a swift witness for having rebelled against the light, treacherous dealings,—are all marked, fine prayers scrutinized, fleshly zeal for the Lord's glory condemned, and all glorying in the flesh, self-seeking, and self-pleasing condemned together. It is then seen how spiritual privileges with temporal favours have been all abused. The path is trodden back, every step examined, and every one not marked with prayer questioned and condemned for folly and presumption.

Here was searching work, not all at one time, but at different times, just as I could bear it; sometimes all my religion gone, all hope for a time seeming to be taken away, and like as it was written in Ezekiel's roll, I had "lamentation and woe," bitter reproaches and self-condemnation. It appeared at times as if I had reaped a harvest of desperate sorrow, and I threw it out in lamentations, sighs, groans, prayers, and tears. The throne and cross were the places that I sought unto for safety and deliverance. These never totally failed me, though apparently refuge failed me; but the fire and water which threatened a final separation were made the means of bringing Jesus and my soul together. The battle field, fire, and blood, always brought down my Beloved; though ready to perish before he came, come he always did. At times I have been so sunk in sorrow, and at others so swallowed up in the things of God, that I have appeared almost in another world. I have entered most sensibly into the meaning of Jer. xxx. 6, 7.

Many precious portions of the Lord's word have been opened and applied, given and eaten, and been the joy and rejoicing of my

heart. You will expect to hear something more of the effects of this dispensation upon my soul. My mind has been impressed with a deep conviction of the totally lost, ruined, degraded, hardened, deceived, enslaved nature of man, the solemn importance of the things of the Spirit, the blessedness of knowing Christ by the Holy Ghost, the preciousness of the Bible, the inexpressible favour of being allowed to walk with God, (where the gift is imparted,) that man is vanity, and that Christ alone is substance. For myself, I am very far, alas! from what I would be and ought to be; I want humility. I have escaped, I hope, though but as it were with the skin of my teeth. In my health I am partially restored, but with shattered nerves, a broken constitution, and the blood determining to the head, especially after exertion through merely preaching, or rather trying to preach, once on a Lord's day. I am waiting for the fulfilment of the Lord's word in all that concerns me, but have "a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me." Though I know that the defence of the powers of darkness is departed, yet I cannot altogether rout them. I am a very poor creature, helpless, defenceless to the last degree; without Christ, of all men most miserable. I hope I have learnt something to profit; this I have learnt, if I stir without prayer I do myself mischief. How have I suffered for my folly and presumption in this thing! "Bring hither the ephod," was the language of David; the Lord make it mine. My wisdom and my knowledge have perverted my way in ten thousand instances: "The way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jesus is given as a Leader and Commander to the people; he is wisdom; out of his mouth cometh understanding. Without Christ I savour of nothing good, can think nothing, do nothing, am quite impoverished, and at all times a dependant upon sovereign power and sovereign bounty. I want the Holy Ghost to renew me in the spirit of my mind. I desire to abound in all wisdom and knowledge of my own extreme poverty, weakness, ignorance, vanity, and nothingness. I would desire to watch as on the confines of an eternal world. Humbly adoring Divine Sovereignty, I would desire deep and unfeigned humility, and much of the fear of the Lord. Self-loathing, self-reproaching, self-hating, have at all times taken place; and I have abhorred myself on account of my abominations, and would no more open my mouth. Silence much becomes me before the Lord. Surely I have had much forgiven. I am extremely ignorant, yet, sad to say, a proud, base, backsliding, treacherous dealer. I want to learn how to deny myself, how to take up my cross daily, how to follow Jesus.

I appear to know but very little; but am enabled to wait upon the Lord at times, and he condescends to show me his way. I then learn that I can only know the things of the Spirit by the Spirit, and that I can only move spiritually as acted upon. I learn that power belongeth unto God, weakness unto the creature; for I am not sufficient for any thing. I feel at times as stupid as a block, as ignorant as an ass, as empty as if I had never heard of

grace, as dead as if I were altogether a stranger to Divine power, quite empty, cleared out, and all my stock gone. I am sometimes wearied out with waiting, fasting, and temptation; in deaths oft; and inquiring, "Wilt thou show wonders to the dead?" "As dying, but behold I live." I go to the throne with a body of sin and death, fall down before the Lord and beg for a token, a word, a ray of light. Sometimes sorely pressed, I cry, "O that I might have Christ!"

Sometimes I feel a touch and begin to melt. Seldom I have to travel very far, when I am quite broken down with sorrow, without a visit from Jesus. He comes, and all is straight and right. I eat, drink, and rest, and then journey on again. My Lord's visits are sometimes short, always sweet; he carries honey, and balm, wine, milk, oil of joy, and garments of praise; he pours me out a blessing, and I bless him; the earthen vessel runs over with tears of joy, and "the voice of melody and thanksgiving are heard in the tabernacle of the righteous." He is a Christ full of blessing, so that whatever he toucheth is blessed. In proportion to my sorrows, my joys are weighed out; and this for the most part constitutes my uniform experience. If my affections get blunted by playing the harlot, if I become dead and slothful, if I become proud and conceited, I generally get nothing either better or worse than a stone, to drive away my foolish heart from its mischief; and drawn by a secret something, and pressed by necessity, with confession and supplication I return unto the Lord.

I am learning slowly, I think, the Lord's sovereignty in giving; and that in all his dealings with me he is Lord of all. He will prescribe the way and do all his pleasure; he keeps all the stores of grace, all the promises, and the keys of the kingdom, in his own hand for our security. The prayer book of the saints is in his possession; every spiritual petition is his before it is ours; and the Spirit maketh intercession for us according to the will of God. If we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us. When Jesus comes and applies the sacred key, the faculties of the new man begin to expand; and while the Lord stays they are kept open, and there is fellowship and communion. When he goes away, the new man begins to close, and I go down sensibly in my feelings to my own sad place. He appears to take the rod and the staff with him; the anointed prayer and anointed praise are gone, and out of the broken cistern runs inevitably all the treasure. Sometimes an enemy plunders me, and sometimes I behave myself unseemly; and this lays me low, and guilt and grief press me down. Times of darkness and temptation generally succeed manifestations. Satan, the master of black arts, generally plays me a trick; and his devices are so diversified, that he is a skilful man who can successfully combat with him. I have always suffered much from him. Sometimes he would persuade me that I am wrong altogether. Sometimes he tells me I shall die a finished hypocrite, and that the Lord will let me into the knowledge of it some of these days. Sometimes he has tried to persuade me out of the reality of

Christ's kingdom altogether, and tells me I shall only have my trouble by the way as a recompense for my journey.

These things do indeed sometimes stagger me; but when I can get near the throne, and am enabled to beg of Jesus to break down the power of sin and Satan in me and over me, he not unfrequently shows me that my record is on high, and that all my enemies shall be found liars unto me, and that I shall tread upon their high places. I have a heart that plagues me much, and I fear at times much from this quarter. It seems at times as if it would be wicked gratis, that is, without either provocation, or any of the rewards of sin. I frequently groan, being burdened, but am in hopes at times things will be better, and that I shall have rest from this sinful strife. But this is one of my mistakes, and one of not a few that I make. When shall I become "a man, and put away childish things?"

I hope you will favour me with a few lines again when convenient, and that you will be able to make out my letter, which I hope contains some of the things of the Spirit. What is flesh is mine, and this part you will excuse.

The Lord Jesus be with thy Spirit. Amen.

K— C—.

R. L.

AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER BY THE LATE
W. HUNTINGTON.—No. VI.

Be not afraid of the name of Antinomian, which in our day is given to those who are partakers of the Holy Ghost; for a bad name will never hurt a good man.

1. A real Antinomian in the sight of God, is one who holds the truth in unrighteousness.

2. One who has Gospel notions in his head, but no grace in his heart.

3. He is one who makes a profession of Christ Jesus; but was never purged by his blood, renewed by his Spirit, nor saved by his power.

4. With him carnal ease passes for gospel liberty, and daring presumption for the grace of assurance.

5. He is alive without the law, the sentence of the moral law having never been sent home to him.

6. The law of Christ was never sealed on him, the law of truth was never received by him, nor the law of liberty proclaimed to him.

7. He was never arraigned at, nor taken from, the throne of judgment.

8. He was never justified at the throne of grace, nor acquitted at the bar of equity.

9. The tremendous attributes of righteousness were never seen nor felt by him.

10. The righteousness of the law was never fulfilled in him, the

righteousness of the law was never fulfilled by him, the righteousness of faith was never imputed to, nor the fruits of righteousness brought forth by him.

11. He is an enemy to the power of God, to the experience of the just, and to every minister of the Spirit; and is in union with none but hypocrites, whose uniting ties are the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity.

12. He is one who often changes his opinions, but is never changed in heart.

13. He turns to many sects and parties, but never turns to God. In word he is false to Satan, in heart he is false to God; false to Satan by uttering truth, and false to God by a false profession.

14. He is a false professor in the world, and in the household of faith he is a false brother.

15. He is a child of Satan in the congregation of dissemblers, and a bastard in the congregation of the righteous.

16. By mouth he contends for a covenant that cannot save him, and in heart he hates the one that can.

17. His head is at Mount Calvary, and his heart and soul are at Mount Sinai.

18. He is a Pharisee at Horeb, and a hypocrite in Zion.

19. He is a transgressor of the law of works, a rebel to the law of faith, a sinner by the ministry of the letter, and an unbeliever by the ministry of the Spirit.

20. As a wicked servant, he is cursed by the eternal law; and as an infidel, he is damned by the everlasting gospel. And this is a real Antinomian in the sight of God.

W. H., S. S.

A TRYING PATH.

My dear Friends,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied through Jesus Christ, by the sweet operations of the Holy Spirit, unto you and the church of Christ at B.

I fear you will think me one of the most ungrateful and unthankful of all beings, after the repeated kindness shown to me a poor stranger, never to write to thank you. I do assure you, my dear friends, it is not because I have forgotten your kindness, nor because I have not or do not remember and feel grateful to God and to you for the many favours you showed me and my family while at B. I pray God that he will bless you in your souls with his precious love shed abroad therein by the Holy Ghost, not as a reward of your works of charity—although I am persuaded it shall not lose its reward—but as a sure token and witness to you of your interest in that eternal inheritance promised to Abraham and his seed: "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward."

Oh! my friends, what can equal this, to be heirs of God and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ? The Lord increase your faith and mine; for, be assured, it is only as the hand of faith lays hold

of and uses this shield that we obtain any victory over the world, flesh, Satan, sin, death, and the grave. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." What can a poor tempted creature do against the fiery darts of the devil without it? Nothing at all, but must sink into despair.

But this shield in the hand of faith quenches all the fiery darts of the wicked one. Faith in God, as our covenant God in Christ, will bring the greatest calm in the most boisterous storm, peace in the midst of war, rest in the midst of disquietude, joy in tribulation, strength in weakness, and submission to the sovereign will of God; when all outward things appear against us, yea, and inward things too—when faith says, "For thou, O Lord, art a shield for me, my glory, and the lifter up of my head."

My dear friends will be ready to say, "He wants to make us believe how strong he is in faith." No, my friends, I cannot boast of my faith, I assure you, for I think if I had half a grain I could move some of the very heavy difficulties that have so long lain in my path. But I have not faith enough at times to believe I shall be provided for with bread, when the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, and all things are possible to him that believeth. You may therefore see my faith by my works; it appears to bring nothing in. I think I have never been so heavily afflicted in my life as since I saw you last; in my body, family, and circumstances, all things appeared against me. In my body I am better, but without anything to do. I had a job for five months, which very much confined me, and this was the reason I did not write; for during this whole time I found my labour more than my strength would admit, so that I have found the greatest difficulty in getting home at night, and several times was laid by for days together. My master at last discharged me, supposing I did not do so much work as some of his former men, although I proved by his book that my work was brought in as cheap as theirs; but all would not do. Since then I have been out of all employment. I have also been under the heaviest trial I ever knew of a worldly nature in my son S——. You know some of my former exercises on his account. The Lord so ordered it that he was wrecked at the Cape of Good Hope. He behaved very indifferently on his voyage, but after the wreck worse, for he deserted his master, and would not come home by the ship he provided for him, but got another. He came home and told us many falsehoods, which the captain contradicted when he arrived, which was three weeks afterwards, and would have no more to do with him. He then deceived us by saying he had got another ship, but was robbing and swindling every one he could under the colour of having come from sea, and that he had to receive considerable wages as a steward. He also went to live with some people we knew when in business, of indifferent character, the mother being a drinking woman. She had a son and daughter; the son went to school with persons of property, but kept back by the executors to keep them within bounds. To this lad he sold the model of

the ship he made at B., and received part of the money; but 15s. being unpaid, the sister persuaded him to take his watch and pawn it for 17s., and pay himself. He did so, and returned the duplicate to the lad. The affair was then made up; but falling out afterwards, they took him up, swore to the robbery of the watch, and he was confined in Newgate till last Monday, being seven weeks, when he was discharged. This seems to have made some impression on his mind, and he wished to get away from all his companions in wickedness. I have therefore with much difficulty got him a few necessaries, and sent him off to a distant port to get him a ship; and I hope, if the will of the Lord, I shall be now eased of this burden. I am sorry to trouble you with this affair, but having proved your friendship in so many things, I could not withhold it from you.

My wife desires her best respects. She has been cast down beyond measure, and I greatly feared a bilious fever. Her mind being somewhat eased in regard to S—, her body is getting better. But our circumstances are very trying, I know not what to do. My way in providence is hedged up; I am watching and waiting, but at present no door is open. My age, weakness, and infirmities are against me, but I have hitherto been supplied, and I hope that word of promise will be made good to me, "And even to your old age I am he, and even to hoary hairs will I carry you: I have made and I will bear, even I will carry and will deliver you." Oh that he would give me faith to trust his gracious promise;

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

For the mystery of his providence is past finding out by reason. If I had nothing else to guide me, I should believe there was no God that took notice of the affairs of mortals. But, bless his name, I believe all is ordered in wisdom to humble me and prove me, that he may do me good in the latter end.

I hope the Lord is leading you into the paths of righteousness for his own name's sake, and bringing you into paths you have not known. The Lord Jesus Christ is the way of life, righteousness, peace, truth, and salvation; all our blessedness ariseth from the communication of his grace to our souls by the Holy Ghost in believing; every fresh view is by the Spirit revealing Christ to the eye of faith, and stretching out the hand of faith, whereby we lay hold upon him, and receive him, and live upon him as the Bread of Life and food of our inner man. May you, my friends, and I, be living upon him, and may he dwell in our hearts by faith, that, being rooted and grounded in his love, we may comprehend with all saints what is the height, breadth, depth, and length, and know the love of God which passeth knowledge, and be filled with all the fulness of God, which has its manifested beginning in time, but is enjoyed in its fulness in the upper world.

Give my kind respects to Mrs. R—, and all the friends, to whom I am much obliged for their kindness. I should be happy to be favoured with a few lines if convenient. God bless and prosper you in soul and body.

I remain, dear friends, yours affectionately,

London, April 26th, 1820.

J. M.

A LETTER BY RUTHERFORD.

Worthy and wellbeloved Brother,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you.

I am yet waiting to know what our Lord will do for his afflicted church, and for my re-entry to my Lord's house. O that I could hear the forfeiture of Christ (now out of his inheritance) recalled and taken off by open proclamation, and that Christ were restored to be a freeholder and a land heritor in Scotland, and that the courts fenced in the name of the bastard prelates (their godfathers, the pope, bailiffs, and sheriffs) were cried down! O how sweet a sight were it, to see all the tribes of the Lord in this land fetching home our banished king, Christ, to his own palace, his sanctuary, and throne! I shall think it mercy to my scul, if my faith shall out-watch all this winter-night, and not nod or slumber till my Lord's summer-day dawn upon me. It is much if faith and hope, in the sad nights of our heavy trial, escape with a whole skin, and without crack or crook. I confess unbelief hath not reason to be either father or mother to it: for unbelief is always an irrational thing, but how can it be but such weak eyes as ours must cast water in a great smoke; or that a weak head should not turn giddy when the water runneth deep and strong? But God be thanked, that Christ in his children can endure a stress and a storm, howbeit soft nature would fall down in pieces.

O that I had that confidence as to rest on this, though he should grind me into small powder, and bray me into dust, and scatter the dust to the four winds of heaven, that my Lord would gather up the powder, and make me up a new vessel again, to bear Christ's name to the world! I am sure that love, bottomed and seated upon the faith of his love to me, would desire and endure this, and would even claim and threep¹ kindness upon Christ's strokes, and kiss his love-glooms,² and both spell and read salvation upon the wounds made by Christ's sweet hands. O that I had but a promise from the mouth of Christ of his love to me! and then, howbeit my faith were as tender as paper, I think longing, and dwining,³ and griening⁴ of sick desires, would cause it to bide out the siege, till the Lord came to fill the soul with his love: and I know also, in that case, faith should bide green and sappy at the root even at mid-winter, and stand out against all storms. However it

¹ To threep, to maintain a thing obstinately in face of contradiction.

² Love-glooms, love-frowns.

³ To dwine, to waste, to pine.

⁴ To grien, or green, to long for.

bc, I know Christ winneth heaven in despite of hell; but I owe as many praises and thanks to free grace as would lie betwixt me and the utmost border of the highest heaven, suppose ten thousand heavens were all laid above each other.

But oh! I have nothing that can hire or buy grace; for, if grace would take hire, it were no more grace; but all our stability, and the strength of our salvation, is anchored and fastened upon free grace; and I am sure, Christ hath by his death and blood casten the knot so fast, that the fingers of devils, and hell-fulls of sins cannot loose it; and that bond of Christ (that never yet was, nor ever shall be, nor can be registrated) standeth further than heaven or the days of heaven, as that sweet pillar of the covenant where-upon we all hang. Christ, and all his little ones under his wings, and in the compass or circle of his arms, is so sure, that cast him and them in the ground of the sea, he shall come up again and not lose one; an odd one cannot and shall not be lost in the telling.

This was always God's aim, since Christ came in betwixt him and us, to make men dependent creatures, and in the work of our salvation to put created strength, and arms and legs of clay, quite out of play, and out of the office and court; and now God hath substituted in our room and accepted his Son the Mediator for us, and all that we can make. If this had not been, I should have sunk over and forgone my part of paradise and salvation for a breakfast of dead moth-eaten earth; but now I would not give it nor let it go for more than I can tell. And truly they are silly fools, and ignorant of Christ's worth, (and so full ill-trained and tutored,) who sell heaven and Christ over the board for two feathers, or two straws of the devil's painted pleasures only lusted on the outer side.

This is our happiness now, that our reckonings at night, when eternity shall come upon us, cannot be told; we shall be so far gainers, and so far from being super-expended, (as the poor fools of this world are, who give out their money, and get in but black hunger,) that angels cannot lay our counts, nor sum our advantage and incomes. Who knoweth how far it is to the bottom of our Christ and to the ground of our heaven? Who ever weighed Christ in a pair of balances? Who hath seen the foldings and pyles,¹ and the heights and depths of that glory which is in him and kept for us? Oh! for such a heaven as to stand afar off, and see, and love, and long for him, till time's thread be cut, and this great work of creation dissolved at the coming of our Lord!

Now, to his grace I recommend you. I beseech you also pray for a re-entry to me into the Lord's house, if it be his good will.

Yours in the sweet Lord Jesus,

Aberdeen, January 6th, 1637.

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

[The above letter was written by Rutherford while in prison for the gospel's sake.

Instead of altering Rutherford's expressive Scotticisms, we have preferred to subjoin a short glossary by way of explanation.—EDS.]

¹ Pyles, folds, plaits.

CAN EVER GOD DWELL HERE?

My dear —, —Yours I received, and am glad to find that you are in good health in body, and also pretty comfortable in your soul. It is a good thing to be in soul prosperity; that is, to live upon the dear Lord by faith, to cast all our care upon him, to trust him, to feed upon his word of truth, to feel our heart going out in prayer to him, begging him to keep us near his precious side, to guide, lead, teach, and direct us, to have a humble, meek, lowly, and teachable spirit, to have a blessed and holy confidence, without the least shadow of a doubt that Jesus Christ is our Saviour, our Mediator, Surety, Advocate, and everlasting All and in All. Blessed be God that I am not satisfied with anything short of this blessed confidence; and I hope I never shall be, nor you either.

I know not how it is with you, but it is very seldom indeed that I have such a confidence as this; and whenever I have, it springs not from anything that I do, but from the everlasting love of God, who is the Author of every good thing, who dispenses his favours and blessings according to his own good pleasure. I say, blessed be the Lord that I am not satisfied with a form of prayer without the power thereof, as hundreds and thousands are whose ears are tickled and their hearts affected by the same, and set it down that it is the work of the Spirit, and come from their knees puffed up with pride and self-conceit. But real prayer, my friend, is something not to be got at so easily as this. I look upon it that real prayer is that which proceedeth from the Holy Spirit to the soul, whom he hath previously convinced of its sinfulness, its entire pollution, and utter inability to do anything towards bringing itself out of that state, or anything else short of an application of the blood of Jesus Christ; and which soul He hath brought to fall down before God as a lump of sin and corruption, whose language is, "Lord, save, or I perish! God be merciful to me a sinner! Wash me, Lord, from my sin! keep me, Lord, from evil, that it may not grieve me!"

I can assure you, my friend, that you are not alone, as you imagine. You are not with regard to your fear that your ear and your heart are often affected by your own words, and not by the Holy Spirit. Many a time have I gone to a throne of grace and prayed (or at least uttered words) with a great deal of freedom. Words have flowed with such eloquence, all beautifully connected, and I have been moved and astonished at myself, and have thought that it really must be the dictation of the Spirit, and have tried to take comfort from it. And indeed the old man has been wonderfully comforted and strengthened, and has said within himself, "I wonder what the people of God would have said and thought if they had heard me." And all this time my poor soul has been in a starving condition, and not a drop of comfort has it received; and I have seen that all this has proceeded from Satan transformed into an angel of light, and from my own wicked and deceitful heart. I have been ashamed of myself, and astonished

why the Lord did not strike me dead for my presumption. Oh! what a mercy it is that he resteth in his love and changeth not! If it were not so, I am sure that I should have been in hell long before now, for I cannot think nor believe that there is another such a base, ignorant, proud, self-conceited, rebellious, fickle, unstable, changeable, devilish, sinful wretch in existence as I often feel myself to be, and without the least power to bring myself out of that state.

“Our stagg’ring faith gives way to doubt,
Our courage yields to fear;
Shock’d at the sight, we straight cry out,
‘Can ever God dwell here?’”

How many times, my dear friend, have I groaned out, “Can ever God dwell here?” when I have thought it impossible. My poor soul has been as it were shut up in a prison, and I have tried every nook and corner, and struggled with all my might to come forth, but could not; and I know what these words mean: “The vision is for an appointed time.” At such times, when I have come in contact with some of the dear people of God who were enjoying the presence of the Lord and felt his love in their souls, and have talked of his goodness, of his love, &c.; and seemed all life and liberty, I have felt envious, and have wished that I was like them, for they seem not to be troubled as I am with a hard heart. I think to myself, “Well, what a difference there is between them and me! They seem to be fixed and settled, but I am so wandering, either all one thing or else all the other; they seem to be full of humility, I of rebellion; they of love, I of hardness; they of gratitude, I of ingratitude; they of holiness, I of wickedness. They seem to be interested in the promises, I in nothing; they seem to feed upon the word, and are made free by the truth, but I seem to have no part nor lot in the matter, and am like nobody, nor anything, nor ever shall be.

Oh! my friend, what a peculiar being I am! I wonder at times why any one ever speaks to me or takes any notice of me, and sometimes I wish they did not, and that I could lock myself up in a room and never see any one. As Hart says,

“Lord, what a riddle is my soul!”

And again, many times have I felt such a longing to pray, and such a prompting to prayer, and have thought within myself, “Well, I shall have a sweet season surely.” But as soon as I have dropped upon my knees, all my prayerful frame has fled away, my heart has seemed as hard as iron, and I have had a disposition to get up, but could not for shame, and have mumbled away till, ere I was aware, my heart has grown soft, and the Lord has broken in upon my soul in such a way and manner that I have been bathed in tears, crying out, “My Lord and my God.” And I have blessed and praised his dear name till my throat has become dry; and I have come away humble, teachable, meek, patient, and full of resignation. Oh! how I wish at such seasons that I was going to remain always like this! How I have watched my thoughts! How cautiously have I moved about! How

full of jealousy, for fear of losing my peace or awaking my Beloved ! But that old enemy to peace, the devil, comes in ere I am aware, and tells me that it was nothing but my own fancy, or a delusion. And here I am again, doubting and fearing that it was so. Sometimes I think I will take my pen and write to some man of God, stating my feelings, and ask him what he thinks of it, and go according to his judgment. If he say there is no life, I will give it up. But I find that it would be as hard to give up as it is to go on. Ah! my friend, there is no such thing as giving up when the Holy Spirit has begun a work of grace in a soul ; for so sure as he does begin, so sure will he carry it on and finish it, and never leave it for the poor soul to finish, or I am sure it would never be done, at least by me. " Salvation is of the Lord," says David ; and sure I am that if ever my poor soul gets to glory it will be entirely all of rich, free, discriminating grace ; for if one good thought or desire towards God would save my soul, I could no more raise it without the influence of the Holy Spirit than I could create a world. But, my dear friend, I must come to a close.

I quite agree with you that there is a great profession, but scarcely any power ; and if you ask most professors to give you a reason of the hope that is within them, it is sure to be grounded upon something of their own doings.

And now, my dear —, that you may be blessed with a great spirit of prayer, with holy and blessed communion daily, yea hourly, with the Lord, and with much of his love, and power, and fear, and a tender conscience, is the prayer and desire of your unworthy,

B————, May 11, 1846.

H. M.

A LETTER BY THE LATE MR. GADSBY.

Dear Friend,—I received yours, in reply to which I just observe that, owing to the state of my body, I have this year given up all thoughts of going anywhere out of my direct road to and from London and Leicester, except to Woburn, which is only about six miles out of my way. I have already denied nearly twenty different places ; and if I go to one I must go to more, and I really do think that the providence of the Lord calls upon me this year to desist ; so you must excuse me.

I have had a very trying winter with my breathing, being obliged to have a coach to and from the chapel ; and though the dear Lord has enabled me to preach a little, which has been a wonder to myself and others, yet the greatest part of the winter I have scarcely been able to walk a mile, and indeed I have had to sit upright in my bed a great deal. Through mercy, I am now much better, but I do not think it would be prudent to try my body so much at present ; so, as I said before, I am come to the conclusion not to go about as I used to do, at least this year. I hope you find the dear Lord is with you in your meetings, and if so, you will be in some measure enabled to say, " It is well."

These are trying times in this part of the country; thousands are out of employ, and tradesmen are failing apace; and I fear that if things go on as they are, the nation at large will soon be ruined.

But, in the midst of all, the people of God have a solid ground for their hope; the Lord liveth and reigneth, and he will see to it that "all things shall work together for their good." This world is neither our home nor our rest. The Lord enable us to feel a sweet rest in Christ; and then, come what will, we shall live to prove that his rest is glorious. And, bless his precious name, this rest is for the poor and needy, the wretched, forlorn, plucked-up sinner, who is rooted out of himself, the world, and all other refuges, and is brought by the power of the blessed Spirit from real necessity to hope in Christ.

The Lord be with you and bless you, is the prayer of yours, with love to all friends,

Manchester, April 17th, 1842.

W. GADSBY.

POETRY.

THE BLIND BEGGAR.

A beggar am I,
 Lord Jesus, come nigh,
 Take pity upon me, I pray;
 O Lord, I am blind,
 Son of David, be kind,
 I long have sat here by the way.

Lord Jesus, I'm poor,
 And mercy implore:
 Son of God, do not pass me by;
 My sight to receive,
 And on thee believe;
 For this, Lord, I earnestly cry.

I know thou hast power
 To bless me this hour,
 To set me, a beggar, quite free;
 Thy glory to show,
 And give me to know
 That I have an interest in thee.

Thy power display,
 And help me to say
 That I, who was blind, do now see;
 That Jesus, who bled,
 And rose from the dead,
 Now liveth in heaven for me.

ZACCHEUS.

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

Thomas Walsh, who died in the year 1759, had been, during his health, a great assserter of free-will and perfection. In his last illness, which was a very long one, I saw him frequently. It was

hardly possible for any created being to suffer, on this side eternity, more pain of body, or more dreadful darkness and distress of soul. His bowels literally came away from him by piece-meal, and the Lord did not give him so much as a ray of spiritual comfort for eight or nine months. He was indeed led through a tremendous wilderness of horrors. In this awful and disconsolate state, though he had, for many years before, (as he thought,) been favoured with assurance of interest in Christ, he continued until about a minute before his death. All was darkness, even darkness that might be felt. "I now feel," said he, "the truth of our Lord's words, 'Without me ye can do nothing!'" But, just before he expired, the Holy Ghost shone in upon his soul, and his last words were, "He is come, he is come, he is come! My Beloved is mine and I am his!" Free-will may do to live by, but it will not do to die by. —*Toplady.*

"Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well." This is a bare assent of the natural mind founded upon divine history, which is none but what a heathen will deny. But *true faith* exceeds this assent and confession too. It sees Him that is invisible to the eye of the body and to the light of nature. It gives credit to God's word, and flies to him as to the great Rewarder of all that diligently seek him; and receives the blessings of life and peace, love and comfort, that are in him, and views him as the greatest of all treasures; such are "rich in faith," and "rich towards God."

"The devils also believe, and tremble." These devils go further than this man in his dead confidence, which fixes the poor carnally secure hypocrite in such a state, who sits down at ease under the woe of God, dead in sin. "Woe unto them that are at ease in Zion," and to the dead in such a profession under the sound of gospel grace. The devil's faith has some feeling in it. He believes in one God—Father, Son, and Spirit, and he feels his own guilt and God's curse; he is in chains, and he knows it; he knows that Christ has destroyed his works, and bruised his head, and he hates him for it, and opposes him, and yet trembles at the thought of future judgment from him as his just Judge. Devils know that the Holy Ghost casts them out of sinners' hearts, and sets up God's kingdom therein, which is a translation of them from the kingdom of Satan to that of God's dear Son; and hence it is that they are so exasperated against the power of religion. This is the reason why he raises such storms of calumny and opposition against every minister of the Spirit, and such floods of damnable heresy against the true gospel, to carry away the Lamb's wife from the truth by a flood of errors; but this deceivableness of unrighteousness never works effectually only in them that perish, who never received the truth in the love of it, and whom in just judgment God gives up, some of them to speak lies in hypocrisy, and others to believe in strong delusions, that they may have no part in the heavenly city, but in the lake prepared for all liars.—*Huntington.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."—Matt. v. 6.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9.

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. xi. 7.

"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Acts vii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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GOD FAITHFUL TO HIS PROMISES; BEING OUR
ONLY REFUGE IN DARK AND TRYING TIMES, OR
IN AFFLICTIVE PROVIDENCES.

BY JOHN RUSK.

(Continued from page 76.)

Now the first appearance of life in the soul is light. "Let them hear and say, It is truth." I mean light enough, when I hear a faithful servant preach, to know what he says is the truth; and this is "the light of life" in the first motions of it. After this I cleave to the family of God, and love them; and by this shall all men know that we are ^{passed} from death unto life, because we love the brethren." After this we have a fear put in our hearts, and the fear of the Lord tendeth to life. We then feel sin a burden; but, though we often fall a sinking, yet he is pleased to raise us to hope; and this is a lively hope. After this he is pleased to pardon us; and then we drink his blood and live. Then he justifies us; and that is justification unto life. Then his mercy visits us, which is his "tender mercies" distinguished from his common mercies, because they come through Jesus; and these tender mercies come to us that we may live. (Psalm cxix. 77.)

We find faith in exercise, and he that believeth hath everlasting life; and as the heart of stone is gone, we are living epistles, written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, on the fleshy tables of the heart. After this he sheds the Father's love abroad

in our hearts; and we are circumcised to love Him that loved us. He then leads our minds upwards; for being risen with Christ, we seek those things that are above, and to be heavenly-minded is life and peace. Then we pray under the influence of his Spirit; for he quickens us and we call on his name, and sometimes before we call he answers. He then leads us into the ancient settlements of old, which is called a covenant of life and peace. Then we have a look at Him that undertook our cause from all eternity; and, as Paul says, he is our life. Then gratitude rises up; and it is the living, the living that praise him. Then the grace of God is abundant upon us; and as we had this life before time; so this grace is to reign through righteousness unto eternal life.

Thus, the fifteen things I have mentioned all lie in One, and that one is Christ. Then, as Hart says,

“Trust in the Lord alone for life.”

But why? I answer, He is the Resurrection and the Life, the quickening Spirit, the Lord from heaven. It is by hearing his voice we live. He destroyed him that had the power of death; his blood removed the sting of death; his righteousness removed the sentence of death; and the love of Christ removes the fear of death, and dread of damnation. He is the faithful and true witness. Trust in him for everything you want: “The promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come.”

Again. We are to trust in him as the foundation, as Peter did. Peter says, “We believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven; and I say unto thee that thou art Peter, (poor helpless thing thou art,) and upon my Godhead (which you, Peter, have confessed, being the Rock) I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” “But,” say you, “how do you know that it means the Godhead of Christ?” I answer, David says, “Who is a Rock, save our God?” and Paul says, “Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus.”

But then there is only one sort of people that will trust in him as the foundation. The Pharisee will not, for he trusts in Moses' law. “Do not think,” says Christ, “that I will accuse you to the Father; you have one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.” Nor is it the most refined hypocrite. No. His trust shall be a spider's web. Nor yet the foolish man, “for he built his house upon the sand.” “Who, then?” say you. I answer, The poor. “Then,” say you, “I am all right, for I could never call a guinea my own.” But stop, it does not mean poor in pocket, but one that is poor in spirit. Now, he is one whom the Spirit of God has convinced of these six things:—

First. That he is a sinner; that “from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, he is full of wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.” David was thus poor: “Born in sin and shapen in

iniquity." David said, "I am poor and sorrowful, (for I have sinned,) and let thy salvation set me up on high." And what is salvation? Why, "his name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." See Mary Magdalene, Paul, Manasseh, and the publican.

Secondly. A poor man is condemned by his conscience, by Satan, and by the law, as you read, "The Lord shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul."

Thirdly. A poor man is quickened by the Spirit of God, and has an appetite after Christ, the bread of life, though he is not as yet fed. But the promise is, "I will feed you, O poor of the flock."

Fourthly. A poor man is sick, tired, and worn-out with struggling against his corruptions, is wearied of the service of Satan, and longs to be delivered from his power, and to say with Paul, "that he is translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son." Well, trust on, and you shall not be disappointed, but ere long shall be far enough out of his reach, for "blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Fifthly. A poor man is one that is called a disturber of churches, a bitter spirit, one that is never contented. But why? Because he cannot be satisfied with every "Lo here!" or "Lo there!" God has promised that from the river of the water of life the streams shall make glad the city of God. Now this poor man runs from place to place, and is sensible of his need of this comfort, of this gladness, of these streams; but, alas! he is disappointed, for they are wells without water, clouds without rain; and we generally have plenty of this before we find a minister of the Spirit. These are the poor: "When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them."

Sixthly. A poor man like Joshua the high priest has no righteousness. Satan stood at his right hand to condemn him; but afterwards he was clothed with change of raiment (an imputed righteousness.) Then, as before observed, the Lord stood at poor Joshua's right hand to save him from Satan, that would have condemned his soul. (Zech. iii. 1—5.)

Thus I have shown you the foundation, and the spiritually poor man; and the Scripture bears me out: "What shall one answer the messengers of the nation? Why, the Lord has founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it." "But," say you, "I am satisfied that what you have said of the poor is right according to Scripture; but are all the things this poor creature wants in Christ? for you said he was the Foundation, and proved it by Paul." Let us try.

First. I said the poor man was a sinner. Well, God's covenant name, which is forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, is in him: "The Angel of the covenant shall go before you." Again, would you have it explained? Then, "His blood," says John, "cleanseth from all sin."

Secondly. He is condemned. Now, "there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. viii. 1.)

Thirdly. He has an appetite; and Christ says, "I am the bread of life."

Fourthly. He is sick of Satan as a king, and of his service. Well, Christ is King of Zion, and "If any man serve me, him will my Father honour."

Fifthly. He seeks the comforts of the Spirit; and Christ says, "If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink; and out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water; but this spake he of the Spirit."

Lastly. He wants clothing, and "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Here you may safely trust, and not trust in vain. You may be poor in this world's goods; He is "the heir of all things;" and you shall have as much as He sees fit who is the best judge; and as for spiritual supplies, he will never suffer the soul of the righteous to famish, because he is the fatted calf and bread of life. Therefore trust on; we shall be satisfied when we awake with his likeness, but never till then.

I will now take notice of some particularly trying times of trust, which we shall find in the course of our experience; and I think they lie in four particulars. The first is, when the Lord is pleased to hide his face. Isaiah says, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel." Then to look back and reflect on the sweet times we once had in prayer, when before we called he answered us; and now, when we cry and shout, he shutteth out our prayer. Once in hearing his word preached we could say, "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand" spent elsewhere; but now, "What a weariness it is!" Once we could say, "I have more understanding than all my teachers," but now "we see not our signs." Once, "Our delight was with the excellent of the earth, and with such as excel in virtue;" but now enmity, hard thoughts, and indignation against the brethren, the Bible a sealed book, no fresh views, but backwardness to all that is good.

Now this calls for trust. For first I argue, how do we know that we are not like King Saul? My prayer is not heard nor answered, and it is said of him; "God answered him no more." This terrifies us; and feeling this enmity, and no just cause for it, against the saints, we then think that we certainly are like Saul that hated David, and, as Christ says, "They hated me without a cause;" and we feel such pride and self-sufficiency, that it appears we never can stoop even to God himself. Heman made sad complaints, and said, "He was full of troubles, and counted like them that go down to the pit, like the slain whom God remembers no more, as one cut off from his hand, in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps; that God's wrath lay hard on him; that he called daily; but still it went on, and no signs of deliverance came; that he was cast off, and that God hid

his face." (Psalm lxxxviii.) But in another psalm David tells you that, when patience had been tried a while, God inclined his ear, heard his cry, brought him out of a horrible pit, the miry clay, set his feet on a rock, established his goings, and put a new song in his mouth; and to encourage others that may be in such straits, he says, "Many shall see it and fear, and shall trust in the Lord;" for the time of trust is when the promise is delayed, and the longer it is put off, the more I am tried about trusting in him. Thus when he hides his face I am to trust.

Secondly. When he appears to smile on the wicked in providence. "They have more than heart could wish," their strength is firm, they thrive in everything they do; but when we compare God's dealings with us, and find we can hardly get bread to eat, and what we get is through the fire, we think how does this agree with, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is: he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters, and shall not be careful in the year of drought;" and, "Blessed in the basket and store." Now when the promise runs one way and providence runs another, this is very trying. But remember, he has only promised to supply our need; and what is living by faith, if this is not? And he says, "It shall be so; I will leave in the midst of the land an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." Thus, when he smiles on the wicked, and frowns on us in providence, it has this voice—*Trust*.

Thirdly. When we find many enemies, strong corruptions within, uncleanness, inordinate affections, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, that we once thought were dead and buried; but now is there a resurrection among these inward devils. Against those that are at ease in Zion these will carry the sway. "I am filled with the scorning of them that are at ease;" and worldly men will jeer us, make game of our religion, oppress us in our character and circumstances, or, as David says, "would swallow us up." Now, what we want is to see and feel sin subdued, hypocrites and worldlings cut off; but instead of this, things go on, and they wear out the saints of the Most High. Nevertheless, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." "Thou, O God, shalt bring them down to the pit of destruction; but I will trust in thee."

Fourthly. When all these come together, the hiding of God's face, frowning providence, enemies in our work, in the church, in the heart, and God appears our enemy, as Mr. Barry says in *The Mystery of the Apple Tree*, "for all these to come together, as they certainly did in Job, O how does this call for trust! how does this try the reality of God's work!" And yet Job says, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

Thus, in a small degree, I have treated on *trust*—what is not trust, what is false trust; what is real trust, and that in the Lord, which shows he is the only object of trust. Then let me, *secondly*, show what is meant by doing good.

II. Now, take notice, before you and I can do anything that is good, we must be furnished from above, for "a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit;" and we all are, by original sin, children of wrath, one as well as another; and therefore the Scripture says, "The man of God must be thoroughly furnished to every good word and work." Let us make as clear work as we can, for to talk of a man dead in trespasses and sins doing good, is talking nonsense.

(To be continued.)

THE SWORD OF JUSTICE AWAKENED AGAINST GOD'S FELLOW.

PART OF A SERMON BY RALPH ERSKINE, PREACHED BEFORE THE
ORDINANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, JULY 3, 1720.

(Continued from page 71.)

Now, the Shepherd's blood, shed by the sword of justice, is for the benefit of the sheep many ways. Why?

(1.) It is *peace-speaking* blood; it speaks "better things than the blood of Abel." It speaks peace and reconciliation with God, which is founded upon the blood of Christ. This is the wine that cheers the heart of God and man. The justice of God took a drink of this blood till it was cheered and satisfied: and when the soul of the sinner gets a drink of this blood, O this red wine rejoices his heart!

(2.) It is a *heart-cleansing* blood. The blood of the Shepherd, shed by the sword of justice, is for the washing of the sheep: "The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin." It cleanses meritoriously from the guilt of sin, in justification; it cleanses efficaciously from the filth of sin, in sanctification; it cleanses only; for no means, no duties, no tears, no prayers, no sermon, no sacrament, no ordinances, no communion-table, will cleanse you from sin, but only the blood of Christ. It cleanses infallibly: for all the devils in hell, and all the evils in the heart, shall not be able to mar the efficacy of this blood, if it be sprinkled on you by the hand of the Spirit. The whole company that are standing about the throne, have "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

(3.) This blood, which the sword of justice draws from the Shepherd, is *healing* blood, for the healing of his sheep: "By his stripes we are healed." Were your diseases never so desperate, here is a healing medicine for them; it can heal the hardness of the heart: "They shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn." It can heal the barren soil of the heart, and turn it to a fertile ground: "From me is thy fruit found." (Hos. xiv. 8.) From my Spirit, as the efficient; and from my blood, as the procuring cause.

(4.) It is a *sweet-smelling* blood. It has a sweet-smelling savour in the nostrils of the Lord of Hosts: and it perfumes the duties of

the believer: "We are accepted only in the Beloved." Our persons, our prayers, our preaching, our communicating, will all stink, unless they be dipped in the blood of the Lamb.

(5.) This blood of the Surety, shed by the sword of justice, is *bliss-procurting* blood; and one of the chief blessings given, is the Holy Ghost; the Spirit is one of the greatest instances of the love of God in Christ. And, O! what is the word without the Spirit of God? What is a man, a minister, a sacrament, a city, a nation, without the Spirit of God? What makes matters so far wrong in a land, but that there is so little of the Spirit with ministers and people? There is no life where the quickening Spirit comes not. O, sirs, we shall have dead preaching, dead hearing, dead communicating, lifeless work this day, if the promised Spirit do not come! When he comes, life comes with him. "Can these dry bones live?" Can these dead, formal, lifeless, unbelieving, hypocritical, and carnal hearts live? Yea, undoubtedly they can, if the Spirit blow. O, let your hearts cry, "Come, O north wind; blow, thou south: come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." Cry for the promised Spirit, that we may live, and be lively in our work this day.

In a word, by this blood, shed by the sword of justice, there is a way made of access to God. The Son of Man was lifted up upon the cross, to open the gates of heaven, which our sin had shut; he rent the vail from top to bottom; and we have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. The sword awakened against the Son, that he might bring us to the Father: "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." (1 Pet. iii. 18.) We are at a distance from God, lying peaceably in the devil's arms; "but they that were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ." All the sermons, all the means in the world, will not bring us near to God; the means by which he draws men to himself, are his blood and righteousness: "When I am lifted up," says Christ, "I will draw all men unto me." Well, he was lifted up upon the cross, where he received the blow of God's awakened sword; he was lifted up into heaven, to his Father's right hand; and he is now lifted up upon the pole of the gospel; and has he said, "I will draw all men unto me?" O, say, "Amen. Lord, let this be a drawing day."

VI. The sixth thing was, *the application*. Now, many, very many things might be deduced from this doctrine, by way of application. I shall at this time offer you but a few general inferences, and refer the rest to be accommodated more particularly to the rest of the work of the day, as the Lord shall please to guide and direct. Well, is it so, that by special orders from Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts, the Man Christ, his Shepherd and his Fellow, did fall a sacrifice to the sword of infinite justice? Is it so, as you have heard? Then we may hence see and behold,

1. The infinite malignity of sin, and the dreadful demerit thereof. Did it overflow the old world with a deluge of water?

Did it consume Sodom and Gomorrha with a storm of fire and brimstone? Did it cast angels and men that are under it into Tophet, the pile whereof is fire and much wood, which the wrath of the Lord doth kindle, so as the smoke of their torments ascend for ever and ever? In all this may the demerit of sin be seen; but much more here in Christ, a sacrifice to the awakened sword of divine vengeance. Go to Golgotha, and see the Man that is God's Fellow drinking up the cup of his Father's indignation! suffering unto blood! suffering unto death! for God spared him not, being now in the room of sinners. Behold the earth trembling under the mighty load of this terrible wrath; for there was a great earthquake while the sword of God's wrath was running through the Man that was his Fellow. The heavens grew dark when this awful spectacle was exposed; the sun was eclipsed, contrary to the common rules of nature, which made a heathen philosopher cry out, that "either the frame of nature was dissolving, or the God of nature suffering." And what shall we who profess to be Christians say to these things? What shall we that are sinners say concerning that abominable evil, sin, which wrought this bloody tragedy? It was sin, and our sin too; "for he was wounded for our iniquities; the Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all." (Isaiah liii. 6.) O! how heavy did the Man that is God's Fellow find the weight of sin to be, when it pressed him to the ground, and made him sweat great drops of blood; when the sword of wrath, which he sustained in our room, was above his head!

2. Hence behold both the goodness and severity of God; his goodness, in finding out this way of satisfaction to his own justice, and wounding his own Son, that sinners for whom he was Surety might not be wounded eternally; and the severity and justice of God, in exacting such a full satisfaction, that though all the elect had been suffering eternally in hell, justice had not been made to shine so splendidly and gloriously. O if we could think and speak aright of this wonderful mystery! O wonder that we are not more affected with it! that we, miserable, wretched sinners, should have been pursued eternally by justice, and could do nothing to avert the stroke of it; and that such a great and glorious person as the Man God's Fellow should interpose himself; and hereupon the Father should spare the poor sinful enemies, and make way for them to escape, by diverting his justice from pursuing them, and by making it take hold of the Son of his bosom, exacting the debt severely from him! O wonder that the Lord should pass by the enemies, and satisfy himself upon his own Son!

3. Hence behold the wonderful concurrence of the glorious Persons of the blessed Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to carry on the work of our redemption. For here is the Lord of Hosts, Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God essentially considered, prosecuting the work of redemption, and saying, with respect to Christ, the Second Person of the Godhead, considered as he became man and Mediator, "Awake, O sword, against the Man that is my Fellow." Not that God the Father delighted in the

suffering, as such, of his innocent Son, for "he afflicts not willingly" even the children of men; but considering the end and the effect that were to follow, the seed that he was to beget to eternal life, and the captives whom he was to redeem—in this respect, "it pleased the Lord to bruise him." When he might have suffered all mankind to lie still in their forlorn condition, it pleased him to give his life a ransom for many. Here the whole Trinity is in concert, each Person to perform his own part, wherein all the bright perfections of the divine nature do gloriously conspire. O! how does "God commend his love to us, in that whilst we were yet sinners, Christ died for us!" (Rom. v. 8.) And, O how he loved us, "who washed us from our sins in his own blood!" (Rev. i. 5.) Again,

4. Behold herein the holy sovereignty of God, that overrules all the actions of men, even those wherein they have a most sensible hand, and are most inexcusable. Though Judas that betrayed, Pilate that condemned, the innocent Son of God, acted most sinfully, yet the Lord himself had an active overruling hand in carrying on his own designs. What Judas and Pilate did was not by guess, but the execution of God's ancient decree. How pure and spotless is God in venting and manifesting his grace, holiness, and justice, when men are venting their corruption, impiety, and injustice! Here is a principal diamond in Jehovah's crown, that he is able, not only to govern all the natural second causes that are in the world in their several courses and actions, and order them to his own glory, but even devils, wicked men, and hypocrites, their most corrupt and abominable actions, and make them invariably subservient to the promoting of his holy ends and purposes, and yet be free of their sin; for which they shall count to him. And as it was no excuse to the crucifiers of the Son of God that they did what before was decreed of God, so it shall be no excuse to any man in a sinful course that God has a hand in everything that comes to pass, who is yet just and holy in all. This may also stay our hearts, when the devil and his instruments are, as it were, running mad—that they can do no more than what God permits; nay, in some way commissions them to do. No sword of men or devils can do any execution, unless God says, "Awake, O sword!"

5. In this text and doctrine we may see and behold what a gloriously well-qualified Redeemer we have. He is God's Shepherd, the Man his Fellow. Behold what interest he has in God! and that both by nature, being God's Fellow, and by covenant, being God's Shepherd. Behold what interest he has in us; and that also both by nature, being man, and by covenant, by virtue of the covenant of grace, being our Shepherd by God's appointment and constitution. O how fit is he, who is the essential wisdom of the Father, to reveal the counsel of God's love from eternity! How fit is he, who is the Middle Person of the Godhead, to be the Mediator and Daysman! How fit is he, who is the eternal Son of God, to bring many sons and daughters to glory! The eternal Word that

made the world, also to redeem the world! How fit as God-man, being man, to pay man's debt; as God, to give a value. Man to deal with man, and God to deal with God. What an able Saviour must He be who is God's Fellow! "Able to save to the uttermost." Help is laid upon one that is mighty indeed! What a willing Saviour must He be who is God's Fellow! He could not have been forced to suffer, nor dragged to the work, if he had not been willing; nay, with cheerful willingness he flew, as it were, upon the point of the sword. "Lo, I come." What a sufficient ransom has he given, since he is God's Fellow! O! this price of redemption cannot be over-valued! What a well-furnished Saviour is he, to give life to whom he will! God's Fellow, the party offended, dying to conciliate friendship with the party offending! O what a gift is Christ, "when God so loved the world as to give his only-begotten Son," his Fellow, his Equal! It is more than heaven, and earth, and the whole universe! O how sure and permanent must this redemption be, that is managed by the Lord of Hosts and his Fellow! What a sure and sweet way to the Father is the Man Christ, since he is God's Fellow! Think it not strange that he was able to triumph over all contraries, to outwit the old serpent, to rise again from the grave, to conquer hell, and gain heaven; for the Man was God's Fellow. How highly is our nature advanced in Christ, though not changed into the divine, yet personally united thereto. Christ has not lost his dignity by becoming man; he is the Man God's Fellow. O what a well-qualified and glorious Redeemer is he! Qualified by the Lord of Hosts himself, who had made him his Shepherd, who is our Shepherd. "The Lord is my Shepherd," says the believer; and "He is my Shepherd," says the Jehovah, though in different respects: "I have made him the Shepherd of my sheep." O! if God's Shepherd be your Shepherd, poor soul, if your heart be pleased with the choice that he has made of a Shepherd, and God's elect be your elect, God's choice your choice, happy, happy, thrice happy were it for you that ever you were born! O that a flock of sheep were gathered to him to-day!

(To be continued.)

A SOLILOQUY.

"I will meditate upon thy works."

Pause, then, my soul; and ere another year wings its flight into eternity, ask what more do you know of Him who is so high and mighty that the heavens cannot contain him, yet is so gracious that with that man will he dwell who is of a humble and contrite heart, and trembleth at his word? For depend upon it, if thou art one whom Jehovah the Spirit hath quickened by his grace and power, there must have been this past year a growing in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ; for the Christian's life is not a stand-still one, but a growing up into Christ the Head in all

things; and although this life, both as regards its creation and preservation, is a mystery even to its possessor, yet is it plain to Him who understandeth all things from the beginning, and hath caused it to be declared that this life is hid with Christ in God.

Has not this been thy ardent desire, my poor troubled soul: to know whether thou wast alive, and having had some testimony that thou art, again to desire it? For thou canst not be satisfied with past manifestations, but must, to be comforted, have continual communications from the Holy Ghost the Comforter, who taketh of the things which belong to Jesus, and revealeth them to his own dear people. And if anything short of this can afford real satisfaction to thee, my soul, then, notwithstanding all thy profession made, and the truth spoken, and thy praying and crying to God, thou art deceiving thyself, and the Fountain of truth is not in thee; for a quickened soul cannot—it is impossible—be satisfied with anything less than the Spirit bearing witness with his spirit that he is born of God.

Come, then, my soul, for thou knowest not how many years more thou wilt be a tenant of this tabernacle sojourning below. This night thou mayest be required to stand before the great tribunal; but if not this day, it cannot be long. This year is almost gone, and every beating pulse leaveth the number less; and there is no repentance in the grave or pardon spoken to the dead. Attend to the apostolic exhortation, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves;" and if thou hast not been brought to feel sin as a burden, then thou hast not faith in Jesus as a Saviour; for the Spirit's work in convincing of sin is not to lead a man to seek after doctrine in the letter, but to cause him first to look within to see himself in the dreadful state in which sin has placed him; and when this view is afforded him, it will not lead him to cavil about doctrine, but cause him to cry for mercy at the footstool of Him who can pardon guilty sinners.

Surely one who is really spiritually convinced of sin is in the faith; for such a one knows full well that there is a God in heaven, for he hath heard his voice, and was afraid, is humbled in the dust, and dreads his approach, for he clearly sees that if God does not deliver his soul from perdition he is lost for ever; for no creature can perform so stupendous a work as that for him. He knows too that it requires the power of Omnipotence to make him believe such a deliverance has been wrought for him; so that it must require infinite love, a pure offering in righteousness, and almighty power, to accomplish his salvation; and it is no satisfaction to him to know that Christ hath died, unless faith be given him to believe that Jesus died for him.

Prove yourself, then, my soul, and see that your cries for mercy have not proceeded from a carnal fear, brought on by fleshly trouble; that your prayers, which have been presented in something like form, have not been the breathings of a pharisaic spirit, unhumiliated by grace; and that those times of deliverance of

which you have boasted have been something more than conscience soothed by Satan. And see that you are not guilty in taking promises from the word of God which have never been given to you by the Holy Ghost; for how dreadful would it be to find that you have been deceiving yourself—preaching to others, and at last prove a castaway!

But turn, turn, my soul; remember the former days. Surely it was no phantom, but a dread reality, when first sin, as a ponderous load, was felt bearing thee downward to the land of death, and no deliverer nigh; when God's own curse against sin was heard, and God's own justice therein seen; when first purity was known to be required in the inward parts, and corruption was felt within. This, surely, was no deception; thou hast these things still in remembrance. And canst thou ever forget them?

Neither were those griefs, sighs, and groans which were forced from thee by being made to feel the bitterness of sin mere sentiments in the head, or the expression of such, but the result of having been experimentally taught the solemn truth—a sinner against the holy God of heaven and of earth—which almost drove thee to despair; so that thou hadst come to the conclusion that thou must assuredly be damned for ever; that in such an act God would therein be seen as the Just One, and that thou wouldst have to bear his indignation as best thou couldst, for ever and for ever; but still wast enabled, Jonah like, amidst hopes and fears, to say, "I will look once more to His holy temple," thinking peradventure he might be gracious, and deliver thee.

Surely, my soul, thou canst never—no, never—forget when first the light of liberty burst upon thy wondering eyes, and a testimony was given—such a one as man could never bring, or infernal spirits utter, to a heaven-tried soul—even a testimony of everlasting, freeing love, which brought with it such a blessed humiliation as the consciousness of deserving hell for ever had never produced. Such a state it was, my soul, that thou wouldst have delighted therein to have stayed until thou wast called up to glory; but since then thou hast proved this was not to be thy lot. Thou wast not to be dandled on the knee, nor to have a breast of consolation to fly to in every trouble, but hast proved in some degree what it is to have to endure hardness as a soldier of the cross; to wrestle with principalities and powers, and with spiritual wickedness in high places. But, also, hast thou been led to see that the weapons provided for this warfare by the great Captain were not carnal, but spiritual; and even to this day hast thou proved that they have been mighty, through God; yea, so mighty, that they have pulled down the strongholds of sin and Satan, so that thou hast been enabled to cry, "Thanks be unto God, who always causeth me to triumph in Christ!" And though now, perhaps, while passing under a dark cloud, thou mayest say, "It is seldom I can triumph," yet dost thou know that thou canst not triumph in sin; thou canst not triumph in thine own self; thou canst only triumph in the Lord, in whose name, love, blood, righteousness,

and power, thou alone delightest to rejoice; for these this year, also, have been thy hope, delight, strength, and salvation.

Thou hast (although having had much sin within to encounter, and, like the man of God, found that wearisome nights were appointed for thee; and though Satan has roared loud and long, and then transformed himself to a smooth, flattering tempter, either to fright thee or lead thee a willing slave) seen that, amidst and through all troubles that are past, hath the Lord God Omnipotent reigned, showing that to the Lord belong the issues from death; and with him is the fountain of life. Thou hast in a degree felt the preciousness of his love, the cleansing efficacy of his atoning blood, and the gracious operations of God the Holy Ghost, who works in and by his people, for his own glory and their good.

If thou hast felt these things, then hast thou cause to say, "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain;" and, "O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" for the apostle was taught to be confident, that he who had begun a good work would carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ. Therefore, my soul, why art thou cast down at these few light afflictions? Hope in God, for thou wilt yet praise him, who is the health of thy countenance, and thy God.

December 1, 1847.

PETER.

ARISE YE AND DEPART, FOR THIS IS NOT YOUR REST.

My dear Friend and Brother in a Crucified Jesus,—With pleasure I received your kind and welcome letter, and was glad to see your handwriting once more, from which it appears that you have been poorly, which I was sorry to hear, but was glad to hear that you are better.

Afflictions are the lot of all the Lord's children, either natural or spiritual, and it is through a world of sorrow, pain, temptation, and distress that we are to pass before we can arrive at that blissful home above. We are but strangers and pilgrims here, as all our forefathers were. But O to have a hope in the mercy of God in our afflictions; a taste of the dying love of Jesus; a word spoken, a promise applied to our conscience with unction and power by the Spirit of the Lord Jehovah; this is worth a thousand worlds. It is then we can say with one, that "these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." This cheers up the soul, makes it forget the sorrows of the way at times, and draws out the heart and affections after the Beloved; and we are led to see that in all our afflictions he was afflicted. "He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." The foxes had holes, the birds of the air nests, but the Lord God of heaven and earth, that made all things by the word of his power, had no where to lay his human body and soul, in which the great and infinite Godhead dwelt. These

things stop our murmuring lips, and, when sweetly applied to our hearts, melt the soul down at his blessed feet, crumble us into nothing before him, and we are lost in wonder, praise, and thanksgiving. And in the midst of all the trials, tribulations, and castings down we daily feel, the soul mounts above them all, and goes forth to meet the Lord, leaves self behind, and holds sweet communion with the King of Glory. At such blessed times, all the beasts of the forest lie still in their dens; no lion or beast of prey can touch the soul, for the sun shines with a marvellous light upon us. But again it is withdrawn. Then it is that we go back to our own sad state again, to mourn beneath the daily workings of our bad hearts and the fiery darts of Satan. But it must be so. It is the way the saints have travelled in all ages of the world. For in this vale of tears we must expect no settled rest, till we get beyond the dark valley of the shadow of death, and dwell where Jesus is, and see him face to face, and behold his glory. Then, and not till then, shall we be satisfied, when we wake up in his likeness.

Bear with me, my dear brother, for I feel constrained thus to write to you. I read your letter with interest and pleasure, and felt my heart drawn out towards you, my soul being like a full bottle that strives to burst forth; therefore I write that I may be eased. I also have of late received a sweet and blessed smile from the best of friends, which has for a little while drawn my soul away from earth to heaven, so that I have felt desirous to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. This I felt in reading a piece in last month's *Standard*, written upon the death of a young man, which I believe that you knew something of.

Farewell. The Lord be with you. And if we do not live to see each other in the flesh, we hope to meet in a far better world above.

Your affectionate,

L—, Oct. 4, 1846.

L. H. Y.

A LETTER BY WILLIAM HUNTINGTON.

I was sorry to see my dear friend yesterday at chapel so very low. If we have a real sight and sense of our sins, surely God must shine into us, for it is in his light we see light, and none but God can search the heart and try the reins. The sense of sin must spring from life, and from being quickened by the Holy Spirit of promise; for who can feel that is dead?

The sad calamity which has befallen my friend has nothing singular in it to make it appear as a judgment upon a singular case. David's affliction from Amnon, Tamor, or Absalom, were much more afflictive. Jacob's loss of Joseph, the incest of Reuben, the crime of Bilhah, the rape of Dinah, the bondage of Simeon, were much more grievous than yours. The offering up of Isaac, and the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael, must have been no small concern to Abraham; yet we do not consider these the effects of God's

displeasure. They certainly are humbling dispensations, and such we all need; and who is more high and lofty naturally than you? I know none. The Bible abounds with descriptions of high looks, stiff necks, proud hearts, lofty eyes; and every branch of this greatness God promises to pull down, that the Son of God alone may be exalted. Hence he is said to wait that he may be gracious, for he gives grace to the humble, and he will be exalted that he may have mercy upon us; for he will dwell with the humble and contrite. If you would examine matters, I am sure this mortifying and humbling work is going on in you; and sure I am that these lessons are nearly learnt, when we can esteem others better than ourselves. The language of God in his covenant is, "that you shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquity, when I am pacified towards you." Again. "If any man come unto me, and hate not his own life, he cannot be my disciple."

God accepts and embraces us in his dear Son; but self must and shall be loathed, hated, and shut out, when this pacification takes place, and this your own conscience knows. Surely God would not give thee all these humbling lessons of affliction if thou wast a bastard; the rod of God is not upon them; where he sets his heart, there he sends the rod. "What is man, that thou shouldst set thine heart upon him, and that thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment?" Surely if we are chastened, God deals with us as with sons; besides, you do not hate the light so as to flee from it, nor do you despise those that enforce it; nor do God's children despise you. Be of good cheer. I shall follow this with my poor prayers. God bless thee.

March, 1809.

W. H. S. S.

SANCTIFIED AFFLICTION.

My dear Friend,—If the Lord will permit his poor creature to write you a few lines, I hope it will be for his own honour and glory.

I have felt since you have been away from us a desire to write to you, to ask you to pray for me that the Lord would once more have mercy upon me, for I have been in such a state of mind that it seemed as if mercy would never reach me again. To relate one half of the exercises of mind that I have gone through since your absence, I find, dear sir, would be impossible; but I have cried out from my inmost soul, "O! where will the scene end?" For the first week I felt like a captive taken by the devil, that he was leading me about and showing me one thing after another, till at times it seemed as if one step further and I should be gone; and such acute feelings would pass through my heart lest it should be the case, as made me cry out, "O Lord, O Lord, O Lord!" and sometimes, "Do not leave me," would come out along with it. At the end of the week, on the Saturday, it came forcibly into my mind, "Every man, when he is tempted, is drawn away by his own lust,

and enticed," and what a view I had then of where all the evil proceeded from! "Well," thought I, "I own I see where it comes from; it is out of my heart, my vile heart." I took all the blame to myself, for I felt that all the evil was in me. In the evening my load increased, and I felt quite a despairing spirit come over me, and longed to know the end of my career, for I wanted to know whether I should be saved or lost.

The day following I went to the room and heard Mr. S. preach; but I was too great a sinner to take any encouragement. All that met my deplorable case was this: "Did you ever feel self too much? Did you ever feel the devil too much?" I was sure I could answer that, for I had felt self and the devil too much all the week. In the evening I heard the dear man again; and I do think if any could have known how I felt, they would have prayed to the Lord for me, as my poor heart seemed all but broken with sorrow. I never heard a more encouraging sermon, but never heard a sermon so much against myself in all my life. I was sure the Lord had hidden his face from me, and therefore no encouragement, however forcible, would satisfy me without his appearance also. I came home and fell on my knees, and if ever my poor heart cried, it did then: "O Lord," cried I, "once more, once more have mercy upon me a sinner;" and these were all the words that I dared to utter.

Dear sir, I cannot tell you how I felt, but certainly if I could not have given vent to my feelings, my heart must have burst. I could not make out what the Lord was teaching me, but I do trust I can see in some measure now. I got through the night better than I expected, but O the darkness of soul that I felt on the Monday! I would have given a world if I could have claimed the Lord as mine; but O! at this moment my mind is carried back to the Lord of life and glory, what he must have felt when he cried out, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me!" O methinks what his soul must have felt,—darkness no doubt beyond any conception whatever. And this load of darkness which I felt seems to make me sympathize with the dear Saviour more acutely than ever. But to return. I never remember having such an unbearable weight through the Lord's hiding his face before. I could do nothing but sigh and cry. I could not pray, except it was to say, "Once more, Lord, once more."

I continued in this state until Wednesday evening, when all on a sudden it burst into my mind: "Why do you go on like this? why do you not ask the Lord? He will give you anything. Do ask the dear Lord. He will hear you; he will be sure to hear you." And I kept saying to myself, "Do ask the Lord, do ask the Lord." And I do assure you, sir, strange as it may seem, my every desire, yea, all my needs appeared to me to be carried up to the Throne, comprised in the words, "Do ask the dear Lord." O! dear sir, it was the power that came with the words that dispersed the cloud. Hope sprang up; and O how sweet did hope seem to me! Hope and love came together. I once more clung

to the mercy of God, as my only refuge, and ventured, yes, ventured, to cast my weary soul upon a precious Redeemer.

I find the paper is nearly full, yet do excuse me, for I must go on a little longer. Thursday and Friday were good days to me; my poor soul seemed wearied, and after I got to bed on Friday night, I had such a wrestling spirit with the Lord that he would keep me from sinning against him, that he would keep me very tender, that he would keep me from needing his correction. But O what a strange answer it would appear to some, could they hear me relate it! for in the night I awoke, and, feeling very ill, I laid my arms straight down, and thought what a little would put an end to my life. And it came into my mind what I had been asking the Lord for before I went to sleep; but O what a sweet feeling broke in upon my mind, and, like a sweet, soft voice, twice over said, "Sanctified affliction! sanctified affliction!" Ah, my dear sir, I cannot express myself, but it seemed to me whatever was the will of God, sickness or health, poverty or wealth, temptations from the enemy, darkness of soul, yea, whatever pleased him to suffer to come, all would be right; and, O the sweet resignation that followed; yea, my soul felt, "Do with me what seemeth good in thy sight." This is how my soul was delivered; and though in such a simple way and manner, it is enough for me, for it knits my heart to the Lord, it knits my heart to his people and to his ways, yes, and fixes my heart on the best things. "O let the ransomed of the Lord sing and magnify his name with me; for the Lord is a faithful God, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

I remain, your unworthy

December 6, 1847.

F. S.

CAST DOWN, BUT NOT DESTROYED.

Dear Friend,—I have been thinking much about you these last few days, wondering how you are going on; and I should like to hear from you, for I have been thinking you are gone to ——— to bury yourself amongst the dead. If it is so, I would ask what company or comfort they are to you in any time of internal trouble, which all who have the life of God within are the subjects of, more or less, some time or other. I say this, because, for my own part, I do not always feel the same degree of soul trouble; for sometimes I get into a dull, stupid, hard, unfeeling state, as though I had neither light, life, nor power of soul to move God-ward. I do find by daily and painful experience, more or less, that unless the Lord does, by the mighty power of the Holy Ghost, give me a little light and life, I am a poor, dark, miserable, unhappy wretch, and that too because of the wretchedness of my own heart; for I daily find unless the Lord holds my heart in some way or other by prayer or supplication, or by earnest desire after him, and a revelation of his salvation to my disconsolate soul;

I say, unless the Lord by his Spirit holds it in this way, I find, to my sorrow and grief, that the devil holds it in another way; and O, when he holds it, what sad work he makes with my poor heart! What boilings up of sin, filth, and uncleanness! what wretched abominations do I feel, too base to name to the nearest and dearest friend I have upon earth; so base as to make me blush at times, when thinking upon it! I think it is a good thing, and well ordered by the Lord, that my fellow-mortals cannot look at my face and tell what is in my heart. But I sometimes go to the Lord in this plight, and tell him all about it, even the very worst, and ask him to forgive me my sins and to blot out my transgressions and abominations, so that they may never be brought to light, in this world, or in that which is to come.

Sometimes I get a little rest and ease from my hard labour, and sometimes I bring my load away; and even in this condition, with my load of guilt, the prince of hell comes again and stirs up, as it were with a hot iron, a nest of flying fiery serpents; and O how they bite, and what deadly attacks they make at my very vitals, as though they would, if they could, suck the very last vital spark out of my heart! Sometimes, when sitting alone by my fireside, telling the Lord what it is that plagues me, and teazes me, and troubles and torments me, I burst into a flood of tears, and say, "O Lord, how is it, how is it, Lord, if I am one of thy chosen children, that I feel such evils and such abominations in my heart? Lord, hold me up, that my footsteps slip not; Lord, cleanse me; Lord, purify me; Lord, do wash me in the blood of Jesus, and that speedily; and do let me know, O Lord, that thou dost love me, notwithstanding all my uncleanness and all my sins. I know, O Lord, that if I am one of thy chosen, I am washed, and that I stand complete in the sight of a holy God. But, O Lord, I want to feel the power of it in my heart. I want to feel the blood of the Lamb applied by the almighty and all-conquering power of the Holy Ghost, that I may feel all doubts and fears removed far from me; that I may feel assured that I am in thine embrace, and that, too, because thou art kissing away all my sorrows and all my troubles."

Again, with another flow of tears, and my heart going up toward heaven, I cry, "O Lord, let the voice of my supplication come up before thee, even into thine ears; and let me know that it hath reached thine ears by a blessed and powerful manifestation of thy salvation felt in my soul." Thus I have cried and wept, till my body has become faint and feeble. And sometimes, while thus crying to the Lord, (for it hath been thus with me more than once or twice,) I have felt as though these internal and infernal enemies had got a little out of the way, as though they had withdrawn themselves from me for the present, as though they could not stand their ground while this sort of crying is going on, so that there has been a little composure, and but a little, for I very soon found, though they were withdrawn, that they were not dead, for they very soon came forth in some ugly shape or other, to my grief.

But I must not enlarge; therefore, by way of conclusion, I would say, may the Lord ever keep you and me from the evil of our own hearts, and from the evils of this giddy world, and from the errors of the religious world; for I verily believe that nine out of every ten of the so-called very pious men and very pious women are a God dishonouring, Christ debasing, and Holy Ghost despising generation of evil doers.

Yours in truth, and for truth's sake,

Bedworth, March 6th, 1846.

J. W.

UNDER TUTORS AND GOVERNORS.

Dear young Friend,—When I was at —, you said that you should be glad to have a line from me. I have many times thought about you since, and of the state of mind that you were then in, the deep soul exercise that you were then under, the many temptations that your soul was passing through, the hard bondage that you were obliged to endure, the many fears that your mind was burdened with, the sore conflict that you felt with indwelling sin, and also of the little hope that you felt spring up at times, that the Lord would some day bring you out and deliver you.

Now these are true marks that you are under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the Father; and in this school your soul is being taught such lessons and learning such truths that you are led to see and feel that you must be saved by free and sovereign grace alone; and under this schoolmaster your soul will be fitted and prepared to enter fully and sweetly into the riches of God's discriminating grace, mercy, and truth; so that when faith is come, you will be no longer under a schoolmaster, but will feel a child of liberty by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And then you will feel the spirit of adoption, crying, "Abba, Father!" and also enjoy all the liberty of a son and an heir of the most high God, and walk in the sweet liberty and freedom of the everlasting gospel of the blessed God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ, feeling your conscience purged from dead works, your guilt washed away in the blood of the great Immanuel, your naked soul clothed in his perfect righteousness, and your heart under the sweetest enjoyment of the love, joy, peace, and blessedness of that peace-making, peace-speaking, and peace-keeping blood. What a mercy for you that the Lord stopped you in your youth, and brought you to hate sin and yourself on account of sin! I have no doubt that you have made many promises unto the Lord, and told him how near you would live unto him, if he would but give you your heart's desire. But have you not broken them as well as made them? and have you not felt some hidden evil of your heart broken up and brought to light, which has got the mastery over you, and after it your soul has sunk fathoms deeper than it was before, so that you have proved that "it is not of him

that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy?" And as the Lord carries on his work within your soul, you will see and feel so many things that it will make you stumble; and as the Lord leads you down into the chambers of imagery, you will see and feel such things as will make your soul tremble. But still do not think it strange, as though some strange thing had happened unto you. It is what all the living family of God must experience, sooner or later. So fear not, be not dismayed, the Lord will help you, support you, stand by you, and bring you through; and then your soul will prove what grace has done, what grace can do, and also what grace will do. So that you will have to tell your friends what the Lord has done for you, and say with David, "Come, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what the Lord has done for my soul."

I can tell you that when the Lord took off my burden, and knocked off the chains and fetters from my soul, it was a high day with me indeed, and a day of true memorial, although I never had heard tell of such a thing from any man, except I had heard the church minister say, "That a man must be born again before he could enter into the kingdom of heaven;" but he never described what it was to be born again, but my soul had to learn it by painful experience. And after the Lord hid his face from me, and broke up the hidden evils of my base heart, and brought up such sins and abominations to light within my heart, it almost drove me into despair; but still my soul proved that his grace was sufficient to support me under it, and bring me through it. And I had no one to speak to about my sufferings and hard conflicts, but was obliged to breathe them out unto the Lord in secret, and he that seeth in secret rewarded me openly.

That the Lord may break your bonds, knock off your chains and fetters, and bless you with joy and peace in believing, is the desire of,

Yours in the truth,

Woburn, October 23, 1846.

T. G.

HOPE THOU IN THE LORD.

My beloved Daughter,—I received yours this afternoon, and according to your expressed wish will endeavour to scribble out a few lines, and do earnestly beg of the Lord that he will make my pen as that of a ready writer, so that, although we are not at this time favoured to see each other in the flesh, yet, under the teaching of the holy and blessed Spirit, our souls may commune together of the things we have tasted and handled of the concerns of eternity. Then writing would indeed to me be a blessed, profitable, and encouraging employment; without it, it would be as well let alone. But this much I must say, that if I were not to write until I really felt the fire burn, I should seldom or never do so; for it has often been the case with me that when I have begun I

have felt as hard and barren as a flinty rock, and I have felt much more inclined to throw away both pen and paper than to proceed. But it has often been the case at these seasons, that before I was aware the fire has begun to burn, my soul has been enlarged, darkness and deadness have given way, and I have been enabled to write of the love of a covenant God to my soul, and bear my feeble testimony to the everlasting truth as it is in Jesus. Trusting, therefore, again to the veracity of his promises, and hoping, yea believing, that he who hath delivered doth deliver, and will continue to deliver, I look to Him at this time to deliver an unworthy worm from felt darkness by lifting up upon me the light of his countenance, thus chasing death and darkness from my mind, and enabling me by grace divine

"To tread the world beneath my feet,
And all that earth calls good or great."

I must inform my beloved child and fellow traveller in tribulation's thorny path that the Lord has seen fit again to put me in the furnace; but yet I can say with Paul, "Though cast down, I am not destroyed; though afflicted, not forsaken;" for the Lord in tender mercy keeps up in my soul a good hope through grace that I shall never be forsaken; and though I daily groan under a body of sin and death, and often cry out in great bitterness of spirit, "O wretched man that I am!" and though my unwearying and constantly attending enemy often suggests to my mind that I am a hypocrite and shall finally fall; yet, in the midst of all, the dear Lord, in tender mercy, keeps alive a measure of hope that I shall not be destroyed. This is often a comfort to me in my deepest distress of mind, where it is written, "To you that believe he is precious." I can say, and appeal to a heart-searching God, in the language of the hymn—

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!"

"Yes, he is precious to my soul,
My transport and my trust;
Jewels to him are gaudy toys,
And gold is sordid dust."

As I was before saying, the Lord has seen fit again to put me in the furnace, both by affliction of body and want of employment. These combined troubles I need not tell you are a source of great anxiety of mind, and cause great mental exercise. I have all along found the daily supply was just sufficient for the daily needs; but now these streams are dried up. Satan and carnal reason ask a thousand prying and inquisitive questions, such as how and by what means am I to be delivered out of the present difficulty?

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain."⁴

O that the holy and ever-blessed Spirit would enable us at all times and under all circumstances to leave the interpretation of these difficult matters in His hands who alone can interpret them

aright, while we stand still and see and wonder at the salvation of the Lord. But we must be meddling, and are always trying to manage our own affairs; and when anything appears to go a little cross-handed, we are as fretful and rebellious as a child in weaning, arraign his dealings towards us at the bar of our finite judgment, and think it hard to be thus dealt with. But how different our feelings when the sea of prosperity runs smoothly! O how we can at times thank and bless God then, and rejoice in the sunshine like butterflies, forgetting at the time that night cometh after day, and winter after summer; for the Lord hath said, "In the day of prosperity be glad, and in the day of adversity consider, for the Lord has set the one against the other." So it appears there is a necessity for these frequent changes. Perhaps it is with me that in the days of providential prosperity I am inclined to be light and trifling, and at times careless and indifferent, prone to gather the wild gourds of the world instead of seeking after the sweet and delicious grapes of Eshcol, until at last I am enabled to discover that death is in the pot. The Lord sees fit to lay afflictions upon us, to cause us to cry unto Him, for it is only when we are in trouble that we cry for deliverance. I can truly say, "Now I am in trouble, undertake for me." I have not yet earned anything this week, and have not any prospect whatever; and what is worse, if I had it to do I fear I could not do it, as I am at times almost mad with the rheumatism in my head and face, and so susceptible of cold that I fear going outside the door for fear of taking a fresh one. O what poor creatures of a day we are! How easily our supposed human strength faileth, however great! How helpless man can have the audacity to boast of his power in spiritual and eternal matters I cannot think, when even a breath of wind will lay him upon a bed of sickness. In all these things God is evidently speaking to us, and reading us a lesson of humility. But man will be proud, upstart, arrogant man still, and nothing but the almighty power of God the Holy Spirit can bring him down.

How much, my dear child, you at this time feel your weakness and want of power without Him who has said, "Without me ye can do nothing;" and has likewise promised, that "as thy days, so shall thy strength be." Remember, my beloved, the very many severe trials your poor parents have had to encounter and have been brought through, and can now say, and with a feeling of gratitude too, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped us," and hope, yea, and firmly believe, too, that he will never leave us nor forsake us." Look likewise at the great and mighty deliverances he hath wrought for you, and can you doubt Him who hath done so much, that he will now leave you a prey to fear and nervousness? O no, he will appear to your soul and bless you with his presence, which will give you songs even in the night: Which may God grant, for Christ's sake.

Your affectionate Father.

WHAT AM I? WHERE AM I? WHITHER AM I BOUND?

Messrs. Editors,—I have been wishing for a length of time to communicate with you concerning my religion, such, indeed, as it is. I am not yet fully satisfied that the Almighty has quickened my soul from its first-born state, as I came into the world from my mother's womb. Now I do not know whether I shall be able to make myself intelligible to you; but I do know this one thing, that what I may be enabled to say about myself is the real truth, in the sight of the eternal and heart-searching Jehovah, from whose all-piercing and omniscient eye nothing indeed can be hid.

I have been in a profession of religion a number of years, having had the privilege to be born of God-fearing parents, and with them I have heard the pure gospel faithfully preached by one of God's own sent servants in my native village from my very infancy. This I desire to esteem no small mercy; for having imbibed from my earliest days of childhood the sound principles of the gospel in my judgment or natural understanding, (I dare not say any further than this,) I have never yet, nor, blessed be God, do I now, seek or covet after any error or erroneous principles in matters of religion. No, verily not; pure, genuine, and heartfelt truth is what my poor soul many times (I cannot say always) earnestly desires to possess and enjoy; and yet I cannot obtain that which my mind is hankering after.

Now I can well remember that, years ago, when I have been hearing the gospel preached by different ministers, and likewise at different places of worship, I have felt such enmity and rebellion rise up within my heart and ready to discover itself in my words and actions when preachers have been declaring God's truth, that I have indeed been near going out of chapel instantly, especially upon hearing the doctrine of God's election, his discriminating and sovereign grace and mercy, as the same is seen in the Bible throughout, and manifested in the choice, calling, and everlasting salvation of his own elect, and the utter and complete rejection of the non-elect. What a solemn thought! And sure I am this will divide the whole world from the beginning of time to the end thereof. Therefore I must belong to one of these classes. O that I knew for a permanent certainty which! But, sirs, I sometimes fear I never shall; I do indeed; and yet nothing less can or will satisfy the unspeakable desire of my immortal and never-dying soul, even an internal knowledge, an experimental, a heartfelt one, a real one by the irresistible and omnipotent power of Jehovah himself sensibly felt and personally too, as though I were the only sinner in the vast universe concerned therein, or that would ever be saved. Oh! how much cause have those to bless and praise the Lord for his sovereign goodness who know by his blessed teachings in their own experience that they are indeed elected to eternal life and everlasting salvation by the blessed Lord Jesus, and that they shall live and reign with him for ever and ever!

Now in my judgment I have sufficient light and understanding to see and believe the grand and fundamental truths of the gospel, but it is the power of those truths that I want to possess, and long ardently to enjoy. What avails it to me who are saved or who are lost, if I am not found at the last and solemn day at the right hand of God? Religion is, must be, a personal thing, known only to the possessors of it. This I can plainly see set forth in God's word, viz., speaking of Abraham: "I called him alone and blessed him," says God, by the mouth of his servant Isaiah.

Now here is the part of religion that I want to know that I am right in. Regeneration, or quickening into spiritual, eternal, and divine life, is, I fully believe, the alone work of God's Spirit in the heart of every vessel of mercy. The point then is, Am I quickened into the grace of life by the sovereign power of Jehovah? Am I born again of the incorruptible seed, even the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever? If so, then I cannot now be in a state of nature, but of grace. But ah! I so often fear that I am still in nature's darkness, still in the ruin and rubbish of the fall. And why think and conclude thus? Ah, why indeed! because I have had so little trouble of a spiritual kind, I think I may say none, compared with some I know, and many others of whom I have read in books containing the lives and experiences of good men and women, as well as what I have perused in the pages of your periodical, which I have now read constantly for about five or six years. One source of my trouble arises from the fact of my not being able to trace out, or remember, or call to mind any time, place, circumstance, day, or year, when or where I was first brought (if brought at all) to consider my ways, my latter end, or to seek God's face in earnest sincerity. Yet there are times, though they are seldom, that I can say with an old author long since gone to glory, "Lord, thou art the desire of my soul. O that I could seek thee, find and love thee, that I may for ever enjoy thee!"

Through a kind and merciful providence, I am comfortably situated as it regards the things of this world, for which I cannot be sufficiently grateful to the Almighty; but there is nothing in all that the vain world calls good or great which can satisfy my poor soul; but a revelation of Jehovah's power felt within will indeed do it. I have the privilege (and I think at times I esteem it a great and special one) of hearing constantly the pure gospel faithfully and experimentally preached by one of God's own thrust-out ministers; and a more honest, heart-searching, and faithful ministry is, I think, not to be found in the British nation; a man that not only preaches the gospel, but also carries it out in his life, walk, and conversation. Under this good man's ministry I have been exceedingly searched and tried many times, and, if I am not deceived, been encouraged to hope I am in the footsteps of the flock; but it has been so seldom and so transient.

I very well remember going to hear him in the month of November, 1845, full of expectation that I might hear to profit; but I could lay hold of nothing—all seemed against me. On

returning home in the afternoon, when alone I thus said, with many fears of disappointment, "Oh! my poor soul, when wilt thou know the blessedness of being one of that happy number whom God hath chosen for himself to show forth his praise?"

I remember also once at a chapel elsewhere, a sermon by Mr. Huntington was read, when there was no supply. The sermon is called, "Advocates for Devils Refuted." I thought and said in my heart, "Lord, deliver me from the power and tyranny of this cruel enemy, even Satan's power." Now, sirs, I fear a man may have all this that I have said, and much more, and yet be twice dead—dead in sin and dead in a profession.

I remain, your well-wisher,

Nov. 21st, 1847.

A POOR SEEKER.

HOW IS IT WITH THEE?

Dear and esteemed Brother in the Covenant of Grace,—I was sorry to hear you had been afflicted, and I reproached myself for not having written to you; but it hath pleased the Lord to give me so much to do, that I can scarcely get either time or strength to accomplish all I desire.

My dear Brother, know this—that many afflictions, many crosses, many deep and heavy trials belong to the Lord's dear Israel. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." Ah! and he "scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." The bastard professor goes on with his countenance bold, his heart hard, his faith strong, his conscience seared, his way prosperous, like Esau of old; but poor Jacob labours hard, suffers much, and sometimes thinks all things are against him. Jacob was obliged to go down to Egypt, and so many of God's Israel are obliged to go where they desire not, and yet Infinite Wisdom works it for their good.

I should be glad to know what is the state of your mind, what is the ground, the reason, the evidence of your hope. David, in Psalm xiii., asks the Lord five questions. "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever?" Ah! Job says, "He holds back the face of his throne." And so I believe it is, in the experience of many dear lambs in the fold of Christ. But none can ever pluck them out of his hands.

But let me ask you,

1. Does your faith in the doctrines of grace abide? Do you love the truth?

2. Do you ever find the word of God springing up secretly in your soul, so as to enlighten your mind and comfort your heart?

3. Do you ever get any nearness of access to the mercy-seat? Can you sometimes sigh, and cry, and inwardly groan after fellowship with God?

4. Do you ever hear the word preached with power in your own soul?

5. Do you ever find the company and conversation of God's elect profitable and cheering to your spirit?

Think on these things, and the Lord bless your precious soul.

I shall be happy to receive a line or two from you. Let me know your state. Expecting shortly to hear,

I remain, faithfully, your poor servant, in the service
of the Lord Christ.

HIS COMPASSIONS FAIL NOT.

Dear ———, — Mercy unto you, and peace and love be multiplied. This letter will come to you unexpectedly, but, my dear ———, I have two reasons for writing it. One is to remind you of the sermons which you promised to send me when you were over here; and the other is, I can write from a feeling heart, which is seldom the case with me.

Yesterday (that was Monday) was a day of days with me. O how my soul was melted and crumbled into contrition before the Lord! Truly he is the Chief among ten thousand, and the Altogether Lovely. But I will tell you how this change took place. On Lord's day morning I awoke, and my soul seemed full of desires, so that from morning till night it seemed as if I could not let the Lord rest until he blessed my soul. I was almost all-day in prayer; whether I was sitting or walking, my soul was going out to the Lord for if it were but one drop of his love.

At tea-time, I took up one of Whitefield's Sermons, and began to read to myself, till I came to a place where he was speaking of the willingness of Christ to save poor vile sinners; he points his audience to Christ on the cross, and says, "Hark, how he groans!" and really that word, "groans," melted my soul for a few minutes. I went to chapel; and read part of Gadsby's Sermon on the Glory of God's Grace, and I felt humbled under that.

Monday morning I got up about five, and went into the garden to hoe some potatoes, and the word came again, "Hark, how he groans!" O what reliance this caused in my soul, to hang upon the Lord! I went to work at ———, and as I was sitting all alone in the barn, that case of the poor leper in Mark i. 40, 41, came to me; and O what I felt from those words: "And Jesus, moved with compassion!" O that word "compassion!" what beauty, what sweetness I felt I cannot express. O what a view I had of his compassionate heart to poor vile sinners! O I felt as if I could have stood up and preached from that word "compassion" for a whole day! And O what a solemnity this has left upon my mind! The lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, are all beneath my feet. The world and all its glittering toys are to me less than nothing. Truly, my soul is unriveted from this dying clod, and my heart and soul are fixed upon that glorious sacrifice, Jesus. Precious name! "He shall be called Jesus,

because he shall save his people from their sins!" and sure I am, if anything will make a poor sinner hate his sins, the love of God will. This, my dear ———, does not lead a man to sin that grace may abound. No; such a doctrine as that comes from the bottomless pit. These words were sweet to me: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." And again; "We have bread to eat that ye know not of." O how I wept before the Lord! And again, that hymn of Watts's was sweet:

"Join all the glorious names
Of wisdom, love, and power."

And again:

"Stand up, my soul, shake off thy fears," &c.

O! my dear ———, do not despair of the love of God. His love is like himself, incomprehensible. O the heights, lengths, and breadths of his love! Truly it is a sea that can never be fathomed! O how boundless! how great! how full! his compassionate heart is to the poor, the needy, the lost, the vile, naked, wretched, destitute, helpless sinner! and he will in his own time bring them to taste that the Lord is in very deed precious.

That the Lord may guide, keep, support, uphold, and protect you, is the desire of your unworthy ——— in the valley of humility,

W—, June 9, 1847.

J. M.

I AM BLACK, BUT COMELY.

I have been for a long time urged to write to you, and it is not a spirit of pride that has prompted me to do so, for I hope that I have nothing in view but the good of souls; and I wish for all that I do to be done to the honour and glory of God. It pleased the dear Lord to let me roll sin down as a sweet morsel for about the space of nineteen years; and sweet it was to me. I was teacher in a Sunday school, and had the doctrines in my head, but they had never reached my heart; and when the Lord opened the eyes of my mind, it led me to see that I was farther off from God than I thought I was; for as I was brought up under the sound of the true gospel, I thought that I was as near God as any. I ran to hear Mr. G., who is in heaven, and Mr. W., and other men of God. But O! when my eyes were opened I saw to my sad surprise that I was just on the borders of destruction; for such was the guilt that I felt on my conscience, that I thought if ever any poor soul did sink into hell, I surely should.

I worked down in a coal pit, and when I have caught hold of the rope to go down, I have thought myself sinking into destruction. The men thought I was going mad, and I thought so too, for when I have been told to do one thing I have done another, and I could not eat my food or hold my head up. I laid hold of the word of God,

and the first place I opened was, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." I became worse and worse. I was tempted to jump into the river, and I thought I would. I was in this state for about six months, without one ray of hope, and during this time I thought that every sin was brought before me that I had committed, and my cry was, "O! what shall I do?" I felt assured that if there was not something done I should be lost for ever. I was afraid to go to a throne of grace, for fear that God should send me to that place where hope can never come. I have to bless his holy name that his thoughts were not as my thoughts, nor his ways as my ways, for I thought I would try to put it off by going into some of my old sins again. I tried it, but this would not do, for I found that my burden got worse and worse. I tried to drink it off, and think no more about it. I could not imagine what ever brought it into my head. I used not to think about these things; but it was like a nail fastened in a sure place. It was suggested to my mind that God had a people, but I was not one of them; and then it was thundered from Mount Sinai, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." I went to the prayer meetings, but they were crying meetings to me, for I felt satisfied that if God had cut me off and sent me to that place where hope could never come, I had justly deserved it.

I remember, one Saturday night when I was returning from labour, begging of God to tell me that when he said, "It is finished," it was for me; for I was almost spent out. Never shall I forget, for it came with sweet comfort to my soul, "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee;" and after that I had a glimmer of hope. I went home, and as I have a godly mother, I said, "Mother, I wish it was morning," for I felt a little better. I had my supper and went to bed, and about twelve o'clock I awoke. But O the darkness that overwhelmed my poor soul! I lay groaning and rolling about, for I felt worse and worse; I thought I should have sunk through the bed. My mother awoke, and she said, "My lad, what are you dreaming about?" "O mother," I replied, "I am not dreaming." I lay in that state until five o'clock on the Sunday morning. I got up and said, "I will go down stairs and ask the Lord once more if he has redeemed me." I went on my knees by the fire-side, and if ever Jacob wrestled with God, my poor soul did. I got up again and sat on my chair, and these words came into my soul with such power as I never felt before:

"Fear not, poor soul, 'tis all for good,
For I've redeem'd thee with my blood."

I looked round me, and I could hardly tell where I was. But O! the guilt that I had felt, and all those doubts, and fears, and unbelief, all went, and that hellish monster the devil took to his heels, just like a coward as he is. It came into my mind, and I thought,

"If my sins are wash'd away,
Sure I shall stand at that great day."

I was just like Lazarus when the dear Lord said, "Loose him, and let him go." My chains fell off, and I could walk, talk, sing, and praise the dear Lord. I could sing of his precious blood, because I felt it. I could say with David, "I love the Lord," because I felt that perfect love in my soul which had cast out all my fears. I went to the seven o'clock prayer meeting. I could tell them that the Lord was risen. Oh! what a blessing and a benefit it was to me! but I was constrained to give God the glory; and such were my feelings for a length of time that I was constrained to follow the Lord in his appointed ways, though Satan tried to pull me back as hard as he could.

"'Stay,' Satan, my old master, cries,
'Or force shall thee detain ;'
'Hinder me not, I will be gone,
For God has broke my chain.'

Through floods and flames if Jesus lead,
I'll follow where he goes ;
'Hinder me not,' shall be my cry,
Though earth and hell oppose."

And from that time until now the Lord has kept me. In my feelings I am sometimes up and sometimes down, sometimes on the mount and sometimes in the valley, and I am at this time in the furnace of affliction; but I have thought that perhaps these few lines may prove a word of comfort to some poor weak child of God, and if you think them worth a place in your pages, please to insert them; and may they, if it be the will of God, prove a blessing to some who are in the covenant which is ordered in all things and sure.

Please to look over this with patience, as I am but a very poor scholar, and I never wrote on such a subject before. And that the Lord may bless you and me with more of his presence,

Is the prayer of your unworthy Friend,

B—, March 29, 1847.

A BABE.

POETRY.

THAT I MAY WIN CHRIST, AND BE FOUND IN HIM.

That I may Christ my Saviour win,
And e'er in him be found,
No more to grieve, no more to sin,
My soul, how sweet the sound!

Thus breathes my spirit night and day,
'Mid groans, and sighs, and tears;
While Jesus holds me on my way,
And often stills my fears.

With "If so be, I may attain,"
Still trusting in the Lord,
I run, nor shall I run in vain;
My soul, his love record.

I've parted with my righteousness,
 And with my life would too,
 In heaven to live in thine embrace,
 Nor fear what man can do.
 And all my soul doth count but dung,
 Lord, to be found in thee;
 My harp is on the willows hung,
 When thou art not with me.
 Forced by the terrors of the law,
 The race I first began;
 For yonder shining light I saw,
 Wrath hard at heels, I ran.
 "Lord, refuge, refuge," then I cried,
 "Screen me from wrath and sin;"
 My soul now would not be denied,
 So was admitted in.
 Safe from th' avenger's dreadful sword,
 Now in the cleft I sang;
 But soon came forth the painful word,
 "Press on;" so forth I sprang.
 Through foes without, and fears within,
 And sins, and grief, and woe,
 Far more than tongue can tell, "Unclean!"
 I cry each step I go.
 Though wash'd, I washing want again
 As oft as guilt returns;
 To leave the Fountain gives me pain,
 For Christ my bosom burns.
 Still on towards Christ, the Prize, I press,
 Esteeming all things loss,
 And dung, and dross, to see his face,
 And still cling to his cross.
 My Life, my Way, my Day-star, he,
 The Centre of my soul;
 His name, nought here's so dear to me;
 Myself I'll on him roll.
 Nor can I fear what I may meet,
 If Jesus be but there;
 My strength comes from the mercy-seat,
 My weapons, faith and prayer.
 Girt round with God's almighty power,
 Myself I sometimes feel;
 Then proving true 'tis Satan's hour,
 Beneath his hand I reel.
 My Sun appears, I see my way,
 And onward press with joy;
 Then guilt beclouds the skies, I stray,
 And lay me down and sigh.
 I've many weights, they press me sore,
 Could I them lay aside!
 O for that rest on Canaan's shore,
 Beyond death's swelling tide!
 My spirit strives, my nature weeps
 To leave her part behind;
 But God my hold of Jesus keeps,
 And calms my troubled mind.

In oaths, and promises, and blood,
 My faith and hopes are fix'd,
 Though sin and sorrow, like a flood,
 Are with my comforts mix'd.

Lord, hitherto thou hast help'd me;
 In tribulation now,
 Help, till in glory safe with thee;
 In hope, in tears, I bow.

Bedworth, Feb. 10, 1847.

G. T. C.

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

Afflictions are blessings to us, when we can bless God for afflictions.—*Dyer*.

Man is naturally born to trouble, as the sparks naturally fly upwards, and newborn to trouble also, and commonly to new and more troubles.—*Bunyan*.

There is no affliction so small but we should sink under it, if God upheld us not; and there is no sin so great but we should commit it, if God restrained us not.

As no temporal blessing is good enough to be a sign of eternal election, so no temporal affliction is bad enough to be an evidence of reprobation; for the dearest Son of God's soul was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.—*Arrowsmith*.

Seeing Christ hath fastened heaven to the far end of the cross, and he will not loosen the knot himself, and none else can, (for when Christ ties a knot, all the world cannot undo it,) let us, then, count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations.—*Rutherford*.

Christ is a sure foundation; so sure, that lay what load you can upon him, he stoops not; and therefore he was excellently typified by the pillars of brass in Solomon's temple. They were made of brass to show their strength, whereon the whole weight of the temple lay.—*Crisp*.

Without the powerful agency of the blessed Spirit to enlighten our understandings and to apply the doctrines of the Bible to our hearts, we shall be, even with the word of life and light in our hands, somewhat like blind Bartimeus sitting amidst the beams of day, or like the withered arm with invaluable treasures before it.—*Hervey*.

Such as can be content with a profession of a godliness that may suit with the times; that can please themselves with any kind of godliness, or with a form, any form of godliness, and that can change their form when they please—such may avoid persecution; but all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, in the power and spirit of Christ Jesus, and resolve to live up to the example of Christ Jesus, they shall have persecution. No avoiding it; no entering into the kingdom of God but by tribulation.—*Bunyan*.

I am like a child that hath a golden book, and playeth chiefly with the ribbons, and the gilding, and the picture on the first page, instead of reading the more profitable contents.—*Rutherford*.

God had but one Son without sin, but no son without suffering. His only begotten Son was a man of sorrows; and the Holy Ghost assures us that, "if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons."—*Bunyan*.

Let us see what God's elect have done to merit this love of God. Pray, what merit was there in Mary Magdalene? How had she improved her supposed talent, will, power, or light within, or a stock in hand, or whatever other name you are pleased to call this phantom by? The Scriptures say she was possessed with seven devils; but her being a habitation for devils could not recommend her to the love and favour of God, nor could that possibly merit it at his hands. Yet this woman received the gift of gospel repentance, the forgiveness of all her sins, and she loved much because she was much beloved; as it is written, "We love him, because he first loved us." Simon the Pharisee disdained this humble suppliant, and censured the Saviour as not being of God, because he supposed him ignorant of Mary's character; however, the Lord stopped his mouth by bringing him in debtor fifty pence, without a farthing to pay his debts with. But Mary received her full discharge first, though she owed five hundred. Thus the harlot got the start of the Pharisee; as it is written, "Publicans and harlots enter the kingdom of God" before the Pharisees.

Pray, what did the harlot Rahab do to merit this love of God? "Why," says the workmonger, "she received the spies with peace;" yea, but she was a daughter of peace before she received the spies, as it is written, "And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the Son of peace be there, (mark that!) your peace shall rest upon it." But suppose, likewise, that there be not a person ordained for peace in that house? why, then, peace has nothing to do there; for "if the Son of peace be not there, it shall turn to you again," (Luke x. 5, 6,) and you shall carry it to its right owner. Thus, then, her receiving the spies was only the blessed effect of an eternal cause, which is the eternal counsel of the Trinity ordaining peace for us in Christ; for thus saith the Holy Ghost to the prophet: Christ "shall be a Priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both," (Zech. vi. 13;) that is, between the Father and the Son; and thus Christ is our Peace. And that Rahab had no merit in her receiving the spies is plain; for her very name, Rahab, is a name that Isaiah gives to the devil, and is applicable enough, for it signifies "furious pride." This woman was a heathen by nation, a harlot by trade, and a devil by name; and yet she tumbled into the bosom of everlasting love! Thus the love of God appears to be sovereign, discriminating, and free in its fountain Jehovah; and it is likewise sovereign, discriminating, and free, in its administrations under the dispensation of the Holy Ghost.—*Huntington*.

THE

GOSPEL STANDARD.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”—Matt. v. 6.

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”—2 Tim. i. 9.

“The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.”—Rom. xi. 7.

“If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”—Acts vii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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GOD FAITHFUL TO HIS PROMISES; BEING OUR
ONLY REFUGE IN DARK AND TRYING TIMES, OR
IN AFFLICTIVE PROVIDENCES.

BY JOHN RUSK.

(Continued from page 102.)

Now there are four things that we must receive as a free gift from God, before we can do anything good. I know that man in a state of nature thinks it good to keep the Sabbath, read the Scriptures, break off his old customs, go to a place of worship, be honest and liberal; but let man think or do what he may, yet the Scriptures cannot be broken, for it is said, “When the Ethiopian can change his skin, and the leopard his spots, then may ye that are accustomed to do evil, do good, or learn to do well.” Man looks at the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart; and he is the best judge whether the workman works from any principle of good received or not.

But now for the four things. The first is, We must have *the Spirit of God*, not in our heads, but in our hearts; and I will tell you how you may know this blessed Visitor. You may know him by his discovering all the hidden evils of your heart, and making you appear like a devil in your own eyes; for he is to convince us of sin. Again, he will remove sin in his own time; and you will then say, “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgression from us.” Now Christ says, “He shall testify of me;”

and that is by pardon and justification, for he will testify that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin; and as he is the Spirit of faith, will work that faith in my heart to believe that he has cleansed me, and then lead my faith to lay hold of the righteousness of Christ; and thus I am justified in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the blessed Spirit of our God. He will then bear witness to my conscience that I am an adopted child of God, reveal the love of my heavenly Father to my heart, produce meekness, self-loathing, self-abasement, and lead me up to the covenant, the undertaking of Christ in my behalf, show me his love to me before all worlds, his love by incarnation or becoming man, his love from his birth to the cross. He will rebuke me, as Paul says, and he will show me and bring me at times to approve of chastisements. Then by these things you may know whether you are a temple of the Holy Ghost or not. Now this is good; and so David says, "Thy Spirit is good." "But," say you, "is this essential?" Yes; "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his;" then he belongs to the devil, and is earthly, sensual, and devilish. If earthly, the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed; and he is called the promise of the Father, which is the Holy Ghost; if sensual, "These are they that separate themselves, sensual, not having the Spirit;" and if devilish, then I am of my father the devil, and do his works, instead of doing good. Thus it is plain that I must receive the Spirit of God before I can do good.

Secondly. I must have *God's word* in me; but the Pharisees had not: "I know that my word hath no place in you." Now I think one thing will prove whether this word is in us or not, and that is, if it is in us, we shall love it, and that is called "the love of the truth that we may be saved:" "Thy word is good, therefore thy servant loveth it;" and therefore, when a passage of Scripture comes to my mind to assuage my grief, to prop up my heart, to comfort me, deliver me, or encourage me, it is a word in season to me that am weary, and I love it, and read it over and over again to try to get it again, but the Scriptures are sealed, so that I cannot get at them when I please; yet it leaves a sweetness on my spirit sometimes for a day or two. The same when dead and lifeless: "My word is spirit, my word is life." I feel myself more lively, in tune for spiritual things, longing, thirsting, cleaving, and crying to God; my heart is warm; I take up my cross cheerfully; and yet cannot tell how this was, for a few hours ago, say I, I was so dead. Now this is fresh life. "I will water it (with the water of life) every moment, and keep it night and day;" and I love him for it.

Again. I shall go to hear the word so full of vile thoughts, so full of evil desires, under such discoveries of sin, and give way to it, and feel myself in such a backsliding state, that very likely in the first prayer my thoughts wander, and when the text is read, it does not seem suitable. After this something is said, and my attention seems more fixed, and, like Lydia, I attend to the word spoken. I feel a winning, wooing, or drawing power, and get lighter and

lighter, so that when I come out my troubles are all gone. Say you, "I have found this; but as it was so short, and no text came to my mind, I cast away my confidence and thought it was a delusion." I don't doubt that you have. Nevertheless, it is cleansing us with the "washing of water by the word." He sends his word and heals us, and having much forgiven, like Mary, we love much. Now sometimes it is in a different way. We come careless and indifferent, light and trifling, and we go away under such fresh discoveries of sin that we are terrified. This stirs up our evil tempers, enmity, hardness of heart, and blasphemous thoughts, desperation, unbelief, pride, &c. "Well," says one, "how did you hear?" "O, it's of no use; I am given up. I get worse and worse. I think I shall take an offence. I am the worst creature living." But what is all this? "The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Nevertheless, finding at times that all must know this searching, we cleave to it; for to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet; and on that account we afterwards love it. But sometimes it will work another way, and that is, in reading. I find my mind take to the Scripture, and I find my case so pointed out that I do not know how to leave it; and this was David's case: "In thy law will I meditate day and night;" "I rejoice in thy word more than in all riches." Jeremiah also says, "Thy word was found, (why, Jeremiah, could you not always get it?—No! it was found,) and I ate it, and it was the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Then he must have loved it. Sometimes it works another way. I shall be alarmed either by meditating on it, by reading it, or by hearing it preached; and I think I am a hypocrite, and the threatening parts seem to cut me off. Such as, "Though his excellency mount up to heaven, and his head reach the clouds, yet he shall perish;" "Promising liberty to others while themselves are the servants of corruption;" "His own iniquities shall take him."

Now, this is of a three-fold use. Sometimes, to bring us to self-examination; it puts a stop to our lightness, levity, or some indulged sin. We stand in awe, we are full of fears, and begin to sink. Then it is of use to our brethren that may have got into the same state, which we, feeling, enforce it on them with energy. Or it may be of use to a person in a backsliding state, that has slipped openly into sin. And I believe David felt this when he put up that prayer, "Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me," &c. Now, we are to cleanse our way by taking heed thereto according to God's word. Therefore, "by it is thy servant warned," &c. And when we see those that stood high in a profession cut down, and we left standing when we expected to fall, we love the Lord for hedging up our way with thorns, and thank him for not giving us up to our own way. "A thousand shall fall at thy right hand, and ten thousand at thy left hand, but it shall not come nigh thee." In these various ways we receive the word; not as the word of man, but as the word of God.

And love is the chief thing in it all. Thus we receive the good Spirit and the good word of God.

Thirdly. We receive *the grace of God*, which we know by its various operations; for instance, we shall be conscious that we are at an infinite distance in our feelings from God, and know we have sinned against light and love, yet in a few minutes be so changed, in answer to a few broken confessions and petitions, that we shall claim God as our Covenant God and Father, and find nearness of access to him, and all right within, so that we can say, "Where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound." "Yes," say you, "and I have thought that instead of grace, some judgment would overtake me." I do not doubt it; but we forget salvation is of grace, not of works, lest any man should boast.

Again. You shall begin to pray so full of unbelief that you will wish it was done; but sometimes before your prayer is over, you find faith in exercise, which faith calls in love,—two blessed companions, and it will rise so high at times that you will say, "The grace of God is abundant in me, with faith and love that is in Christ Jesus." Once more: your heart is condemned, do what you will. You try all means, but find nothing but accusation within, till you are quite discouraged. Slavish fear, despair, bondage, misery, &c., work. Well, think you, I'll go once more to hear my condemned sermon. You dread the text. But, as you come away, it shall be with your countenance no more sad. Jesus was there. He scattered away all evil with his eyes, and you from his fulness received grace to help you in time of need. "Woman, where are thine accusers?" They are all gone, one by one, and we have come off with flying colours; for we are justified freely by his grace. Then you don't sink so low. O, no; we cry out, "Everlasting salvation, and good hope through grace." Now this we must receive, "for a good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good." This was the good thing towards the Lord God of Israel, in Jeroboam's child. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels," &c.

Now the fourth thing we must receive is *a good heart*. "Bless God for that," say you; "I was watching to hear that, for it is a mark I can easily come up to. I know my actions are not quite right, but my heart—O! I have a good heart, you have given me a lift." Have I? Then what do you call a good heart, that makes you so lifted up? Why, I am full of good wishes to relieve my fellow creatures, good desires to keep God's commandments; and I am for family prayer, family holiness, closet holiness, holiness in heart, lip, and life. Some people talk much of justification, but I am for sanctification, and am so tender in conscience that I would not hurt a worm. I am so full of love that I do not wish to condemn any man, even if he murdered himself. You know God is merciful." You have given me a long account of your good heart, and from God's word I will upset the whole of it, and that by one text: "Every imagination of man's heart is evil, only evil, and that continually." Again, I will bring in another: "The heart is

deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." I will mention a third: "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, thefts, false witness, and blasphemies; these defile the man." Now, though you speak fair, I am not to believe you, because these seven abominations are in your heart, and you do not know it, for the strong man armed keeps the goods in peace. But will you not allow that God is good? "Yes," say you. Then it is his taking possession of my heart, which is called the stronger than the strong man, which spoils his goods, that lays my heart open to my own view, but nobody else is privy to it. "I search the heart, I try the reins." The heart knows its own bitterness. This made Isaiah cry out that he was undone, Job abhor himself, and Daniel's comeliness turn into corruption. The indwelling of God, and nothing else, makes a heart good, and such are honest. They speak just as it is, and no more; they will not try to dress up flesh and blood, but freely acknowledge every good to be of God; they will not talk of a well-spent life; they know it is a lie, for they are the filth of the earth and offscouring of all things in their own eyes, more than they are in other people's, as a good man says—

"That sinners black as hell by Christ
Are saved, I know full well;
For I his mercy have not miss'd,
And I'm as black as hell."

After this discovery of the evil of the heart, it is purged off, and that treasure of grace before described is put into it. Now this is called "an honest and good heart."

These are the four things, and they are all freely given.

1. *The Holy Spirit.* "How much more shall your heavenly Father give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him."

2. *God's Word.* "I have given them the word thou gavest me, and they have believed it."

3. *God's grace.* "The Lord will give grace and glory."

4. *A new heart.* "A new heart will I give you."

But if you are destitute of these four things, you can never "trust in the Lord and do good," and therefore will not.

(To be continued.)

THE SWORD OF JUSTICE AWAKENED AGAINST GOD'S FELLOW.

PART OF A SERMON BY RALPH ERSKINE, PREACHED BEFORE THE
ORDINANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, JULY 3, 1720.

(Concluded from page 106.)

We may hence see the terrible state of unbelievers and Christless sinners on the one hand, and the comfortable state of believers on the other.

1. On the one hand, I say, we may here see the dreadful state of unbelievers, and the damning nature of unbelief. The sword of divine justice, the sword of God's wrath, is hanging over the

head of all those who come not under the cover of the blood of Christ that was shed by this awful sword. It is a lofty but a terrible word you have in Deut. xxxii. 40, 41: "I lift up my hand to heaven and say, I live for ever; if I whet my glittering sword, and my hand take hold on judgment, I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and a reward to them that hate me; I will make mine arrows drunk with blood." The sword of God's vengeance must be drunk either with the blood of a sinner, or the blood of the Surety in the sinner's room.

2. On the other hand we may see the comfortable state of believers in Christ, and the saving nature of true justifying faith. The believer cannot but be safe and happy, for the stroke of the sword of justice has fallen by him, and has lighted upon his Surety, his Shepherd; the death of the Shepherd is the life of the sheep. Though the sheep may be scattered and scared with fatherly chastisements, yet the Shepherd being smitten with the sword of vindictive justice, no stroke of judicial wrath shall ever fall upon them; for Christ has "borne their griefs, and carried their sorrows, and by his stripes they are healed;" and all that look to him by faith shall be healed and saved in like manner. The object of justifying faith is the Man, God's Fellow, falling a sacrifice to the sword of divine justice. Though you should believe all the Bible, the whole divine revelation, except this point, "Christ set forth to be a propitiation in blood," you have no justifying faith. The doctrine of the blood of God, of a crucified Christ, this only is the healing balsam to the bleeding wounds of the sinner that has any sense of sin or fear of wrath. Talk of the law to such a man, it is just as if you should bring a murderer to see the ghost of the man he had killed. "O," says he, "it is the law that I have broken;" and so he is racked and tormented, lest the sword of wrath avenge the quarrel of the broken law upon him. But let him see Christ dying on a cross, with the sword of wrath running through his heart—Christ hanging between heaven and earth in his room, and all the debt of the elect upon his shoulders, here is a full cordial to a fainting soul; here is the act of justifying faith, the beholding of this sacrifice, and acquiescing in it as the price of redemption; relying on that precious blood that was drawn by that awful sword, and laying the stress of his salvation upon it. That is a laying stress where God laid it, a coming under the covert of the blood of the Man that is God's Fellow, as a screen from the law and justice. Here is a noble foundation for faith. We may even dare to approach a provoked God, an angry Deity, the God who is a consuming fire, and a flaming sword; why, here is blood, worthy blood, to quench the fire; the Man that is God's Fellow bleeding and dying in our nature. We may well say with Luther, "Lord, keep me from a mere God, an absolute God, a God not in Christ, not reconciled by the death of Christ." But here is the atonement and propitiation; and therefore faith may come boldly to the throne of grace.

Hence, also, we may see the malignity of an antichristian

spirit; not only that of Papists, who bring in their works of merit upon the field of justification before God, as if anything could please a dreadful God besides the blood of his Fellow; but also of all others that are enemies to the cross of Christ, enemies to the glorious gospel of a crucified Christ. Here the Socinian spirit is condemned as antichristian, which says, "That God was never alienated from man, and that God, out of his mere bounty, without any intervening satisfaction, pardons sins." But if so, why should ever there be such a sound as, "Awake, O sword, against the Man that is my Fellow?" Why should there have been an atonement, if it was not to avert the wrath revealed from heaven against all the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men? In vain did the sword awake and smite the Shepherd, if without shedding of blood there was remission. Here also the libertine and latitudinarian spirit is condemned. O! what ignorant sottish fools are they who make a mock at sin, which, being imputed to the Lord Jesus, made him sweat and bleed in the anguish of his soul! O what madness are they guilty of, who prefer the satisfaction of their brutish lusts to the salvation of their precious souls, the redemption whereof is so precious that it ceaseth for ever, unless the blood of God be shed for it! Here also the Arminian spirit is condemned, and every legal spirit, under whatsoever denomination, which makes faith, or any act or part of it, or anything else whatsoever, beside the blood of Christ, to be our righteousness before God. Such doctrine darkens grace, encroaches upon the prerogative of the Lord our Righteousness, and is contrary to the very nature of faith, which is a passing from, and disclaiming all other foundations, and a running to and pleading of the blood of Christ, shed by the awakened sword of justice. The doctrine of our text exposes the malignity of a legal spirit, which is so natural to men, and rages so much at this day; as if men by their terms and conditions on their part could pacify a God of terrible majesty, whom yet nothing will appease but the blood of the Man that is God's Fellow. Surely they know not the perfection of God's holiness, the terrors of his justice, the severity of his tribunal, the spirituality and extent of his law, nor yet their own corruption, weakness, and wickedness by nature, who will dare to make anything the ground and condition of their acceptance with God but the doing and dying, the blood and righteousness of Christ. Some make faith, others repentance and new obedience, the strict and proper condition of the new covenant; but if we will not shut our eyes, we may see that Christ's obedience, suffering, and satisfaction is the only proper and strict, so called, condition thereof; the parties of the covenant of grace are God and Christ; Christ answering for all the elect therein. Now, the condition of the covenant must be a condition performable and fulfilled by one of the parties, to wit, Christ; and the condition is, that he, in his obedience to the death, become a sacrifice to the sword of divine justice. And upon this condition all spiritual and eternal blessings are promised to the elect; faith, repentance, and all good are promised upon this ground; for, says God, upon his "making his

soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed;" they shall get the good things promised,—faith, love, knowledge, fear, and obedience, which are all the fruits of this grand condition of the covenant. Faith is indeed, of absolute necessity, the only means whereby we come to be justified (manifestively). For it is by faith, that it may be of grace; that is, faith renounces itself and all other graces and good things in point of acceptance with God, and looks for it only in the righteousness of Christ, which alone covers our iniquities, and makes us, to be accepted of God. "Not by works of righteousness that we do," nor by faith as a work, or as the fulfilling of a condition upon which, being performed by us, or wrought of God in us, we may plead for God's making out his part of the covenant. O no; our only plea before God is this object of faith, the bloody sacrifice, made by the sword of justice upon the Man that is God's Fellow; even that our Lord Jesus has paid our debt, by fulfilling the law in our room and satisfying for the breaches thereof. As faith is necessary, seeing "without faith it is impossible to please God," so is repentance necessary, for "except we repent, we shall all likewise perish;" and holiness is necessary, for "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." They are necessary as qualities of the covenanted and promised blessings of the covenant. None that are actually in the covenant are without them; and so all that are without them will perish and die in their sins. But let our souls detest the bringing in of these or anything else in conjunction with Christ and his blood and righteousness, so as thereupon to look for any benefit, favour, or acceptance with God, and let us look for all holiness as well as happiness only in and through Jesus Christ, and upon the account of his giving himself a sacrifice to the awakened sword of justice.

The glorious gospel is much clouded at this day with legal terms, conditions, and qualifications. If any doctrine were upon condition that you did so and so; that you believe, and repent, and mourn, and pray, and obey, and the like, then you shall have the favour of God, I dare not for my life say that that is the gospel; but the gospel I desire to preach is, that testifies of Christ to work faith, repentance, love, and all good in you? Here there is no room for you to object that you are not qualified, because you are such a hardened, unhumiliated, blind, and stupid wretch; for the question is not, Will you remove these evils, and then come to Christ? but, Is there a Christ to remove them for you? It is because you are plagued with these diseases that I call you to come to the Physician, that he may heal them. Are you qualified for hell and damnation? and have you much mischief and misery about you? Why, there needs no better qualifications for you to come to Christ.

Neither is there any room for you here to object, that your guilt is so great, and God's justice is so terrible, that you have no hope; for what am I telling you all this time, but that the terrible sword of justice is satisfied and appeased to the full with the blood of the Man that is God's Fellow? Here is the way that God him-

self hath laid down for getting satisfaction, and there is no other way; though you, man or woman, had the guilt of all the world lying on your back, all that is required of you is just this, to be heartily pleased and content that God got satisfaction for all your sins in this way; and if you be, the sword shall be put up in the scabbard, and never reach you. God gets his justice satisfied more gloriously this way upon you than though he should damn you in hell to all eternity.

[To say that we cordially approve of every expression contained in this admirable Sermon of Erskine's is more than we can do. Purchased grace and an offered gospel were a part of the divinity current in his day; and Erskine, with all his doctrinal clearness on other points, fell in with the general strain. Yet we cannot but feel that there is a sweet savour of Christ running through the whole of the Sermon; and if there be anything legal in *word*, there is nothing legal in *spirit*.—Eds.]

QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER.

[The following remarks are intended as an appendix to the Sermon, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the Man that is my Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts."]

Now we are to proceed to the great work of the day; and that I may accommodate my former purpose to the present work, you may remember the doctrine I am upon is, "That by special orders from Jehovah, the great God of Hosts, the Man Christ, his Shepherd and Fellow, did fall a sacrifice to the awakened sword of infinite justice in the room of the sheep."

There are some general inferences I have drawn from this doctrine; and now there are these four more particular inferences which may be drawn from it with a more immediate reference and relation to the great sealing ordinance we have before us.

I. Hence we may see what is the nature and end of this sacrament.

II. Hence we may see who they are that stand debarred and excluded from meddling with these sacred symbols of the body and blood of Christ.

III. Hence we may see the character of those who have a right to approach, and are invited of God to it.

IV. Hence we may see in what manner believers are to approach and come to a communion table.

Now, a word to each of these, and then we shall proceed to the work.

1stly. Then, the doctrine I am upon may give us some insight into the nature and end of this sacrament. Why, it is just a celebrating the memorial of the death of the Man that is God's Fellow, when, as the glorious Shepherd, he yielded himself a sacrifice to the awakened sword of justice in the room of his sheep. In this sacrament, Christ is set forth evidently crucified among us; and therein we may hear the Lord of Hosts saying, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, against the Man that is my Fellow;

smite the Shepherd." This sacrament is appointed to be a commemorative sign of the death of Christ: "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye show forth the Lord's death till he come." "Do this in remembrance of me;" of me, who became a sacrifice to the sword of justice. The sword of justice having bathed itself to satisfaction in the blood of this sacrifice, the sacrament of the Supper is a feast upon the sacrifice: "Even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast." This is "the feast of fat things, and of wines on the lees well refined." Upon the body and blood of Christ, represented by the elements of bread and wine, which is just a feeding upon, and viewing by faith the value and virtue of the sacrifice for satisfying God, for expiating sin, for vanquishing hell, for obtaining heaven, and all the means that lead unto it; as also, for sealing the covenant of grace, and all the promises of it, which are all yea and amen in Jesus Christ, the testament being ratified and confirmed by the death of the Testator. (Heb. ix. 16.) But again,

2ndly. From this doctrine we may see who they are that stand debarred and excluded from meddling with these sacred symbols of the body and blood of Christ in this sacrament; namely, in general, all unbelievers, who never having seen their wicked state, as liable to the stroke of divine wrath because of their sin and guilt, have not fled under the covert of the blood of the Shepherd, of the blood of the Man that is God's Fellow, who was smitten in the room of the sheep. What have these to do with the sign, who never apprehended the thing signified, namely, the propitiation of the blood of Christ? And therefore, in the great and awful name and authority of the great and glorious Jehovah, I solemnly debar and excommunicate, from the table of the Lord, all who never found themselves in any measure pursued by the avenger of blood, the sword of the Lord of Hosts, and never have fled for refuge to the blood of Christ, the Man that is God's Fellow, to stand between them and the avenging sword of justice. * * *

(1.) All those who think to make their peace with God, without minding the necessity of anything intervening between him and them; not knowing that peace with God must be founded upon the blood of the Man that is his Fellow. Some are utterly careless how their peace be made, or whether it be or not; they hope for it, and think to come at it; but they cannot tell how, and are careless to know the way. Others presume, and think God loves them, because they love themselves; and though they know they have sin, they think God will not be so ill-natured as to reckon with them; they think God loves them, but they cannot give a ground for it. Others think that God is merciful, and therefore they conclude they shall be pardoned and accepted, because a merciful man sometimes seeks no satisfaction; so they think much more will a merciful God seek none; not knowing, that though God is merciful, he will not show mercy to the prejudice of his justice. But the thought of these people is upon the matter, that they would have obtained mercy though Christ had never become a sacrifice to the

sword of justice, without respect to the mediation of the Man that is God's Fellow. These therefore I debar, in God's great name, from the table of the Lord.

(2.) Another sort, who despise this sacrifice made to the sword of justice, are all those who take the legal way of making their peace with God. Not as if they thought to appear before God without sin and all holiness, as the covenant of works requires, but who think that if they sin they will make amends; and that either by something negative that they have not done, or something positive that they have done, or some internal qualification that they rest upon. Some think to make amends to God by something negative; that they have not been so ill as other people; and if *they* go to hell, they think few will go to heaven; and if they were to die, they think they care not, they have done no person any injury; they have carried it very harmlessly, like the Pharisee: "God, I thank thee, I am not like other men; I am no drunkard, or adulterer, or oppressor, or swearer;" and when they see any profane persons, they are puffed up with a good opinion of themselves, because they are not so profane as they. These I debar, in the name of the Lord. Others think to make amends to God by something positive; they do many good duties, like the same Pharisee, that boasted, "I fast twice a-week, I give tithes of all that I possess." If any duty be performed, or any good be done by them, their fingers are ready to stick to it; they rest there, and hope God will be pleased and pacified on this account. These I debar, in the name of the Lord. Others, upon this same head, think to make amends by some internal qualification that they rest upon. If at any time they have liberty and motions of affection in prayer, stirrings of conviction in hearing, and joys of heart, like the stony-ground hearers; any sorrow of heart, or sadness for sin, these they think will do their turn, and they think they need no other sacrifice to God but a broken heart; sadly mistaking the nature of a true evangelical brokenness of spirit. It is certain, both from Scripture and experience, that many hundreds of professors dash and perish on this stumbling-block: "They call themselves of the holy city; yea, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel." (Isaiah xlvi. 2.) "They seek him daily, and delight to know his ways; yea, delight in approaching to God." (Isaiah lviii. 2.) Expectation of happiness, grounded upon some weak performance, and some internal motions and qualifications, do cut the throat of many civil and discreet men, that are not grossly profane. All these, therefore, that make any of these things the ground of their hope of peace with God, I debar and excommunicate from the table of the Lord, as being strangers to the true ground of peace, the Man that is God's Fellow, becoming a sacrifice to the sword of justice.

(3.) Another sort, who make no right use of this sacrifice offered to the sword of justice, are those, who, though they make use of Christ as the object of their worship, yet make not use of his blood as the ground of their justification and peace with God; as if they would not altogether neglect Christ, and yet they neglect his

offering, and would make use of himself, but not of his sacrifice; like the man that came to him, saying, "Good master, what shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?" He was going upon the ground of his own righteousness. So some, they may come to Christ, to desire his help to enable them to do their duty, that by doing thereof they may work out their own salvation, and be helped this way to make their peace with God. Thus, by grace sought and received from him, they hope to be their own Saviour and Peacemaker with God; and so were never brought to ground the making of their peace with God upon Christ's sacrifice and offering alone. These, therefore, I also debar from this holy table.

(4.) A fourth sort, that never made right use of this sacrifice to justice's sword, and propitiation in the blood of Christ, are all those who never got such a view of the love of God in this sacrifice as to kill the love of sin in them, and to bring down the reigning power of sin; for the great end of Christ's sufferings was to bring us to God; the great end of his giving himself a sacrifice to the sword of justice was to redeem us from all iniquity, and to purchase to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. And hence they are yet strangers to Christ, who never felt any measure of the virtue of this sacrifice, in sanctifying, purifying, and making them study holiness. And therefore I debar from this table all impenitent sinners and breakers of God's commandments; all whose names are in that black catalogue, Matt. xv. 19; Rom. i. 29—32; all whose names are in that black list, Gal. v. 19—21; and all whose names are in these black rolls, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Rev. xxii. 15. All atheists that practically deny the being of God in their lives and conversations, and ignorant persons that know not the principles of religion and the nature of this ordinance; and profane persons, who mock at sacred things, neglect ordinances on week-days or sabbath-days, and neglect family worship and secret prayer. All profane swearers, whether by God or the devil, or faith, or conscience, or whatsoever is more than yea and nay. All sabbath-breakers, who put no difference between that and other days. All that are unfaithful in their relative stations, as magistrates or subjects, masters or servants, parents or children. All murderers, and those who give way to the killing sins of malice, passion, and revenge, and the self-murdering sins of drunkenness, gluttony, and tippling. All whoremongers, adulterers, fornicators, and unclean persons, who never mortified the deeds of the body. All thieves, oppressors, and cheats, that study to overreach their neighbour in their dealing. All false witnesses and liars, that make no conscience of speaking the truth; perjured persons, that make no bonds of unlawful oaths; covenant breakers; all covetous persons, whose hearts are glued to the world. In a word, I debar all formalists, hypocrites, and legalists; all that never saw and bewailed their heart-plagues of atheism, enmity, pride, hypocrisy, and unbelief. All who know not the difference between the law and the gospel; the covenant of works and the covenant of grace; and between legal and evangelical

preaching. All that never felt anything of the power of God's word on their heart in convincing them of sin, original and actual, and drawing them to Christ as their righteousness and strength, for justification and sanctification. I debar all who hate to be reproved of their faults and condemn their reprovers; and all who can be witness to the sins and faults of others, and yet never give any sort of testimony against them. I debar all who love not the godly, nor care for their company: all who love not the Bible, nor search the Scriptures: all who love not Zion, nor care how matters go with the Church of Christ: whether its members be divided or alienated, whether its interest sink or swim. All who can go against the testimony of their own conscience for fear of outward losses or crosses; and easily cross their light to please men. I debar all that are not lovers of the truth, but espousers of error; Socinians, Arminians, and Antinomians who are properly so called, for some are wrongfully and ignorantly so designed. I debar all that think they have believed all their days, and never were convinced of unbelief, nor found religion a work above them and their natural powers. I debar all who have no errand to the Lord's table but to take a little bread and wine, and think it an easy work to communicate, nor ever had any fears or jealousies about their miscarrying in that work. All who come only to keep up a name among professors; and all that have no other tokens for communion but that which they have got from their ministers or elders; all who have been at no pains whatsoever to prepare for this work; and all, on the other hand, who think they are prepared enough, and have no other thing to rest upon but their own preparation. All these, and others of that stamp, I do, in the name of the living and eternal God, debar from this holy table, as being strangers to the Man that is God's Fellow, and strangers to the sacrifice whereby he has satisfied the awakened sword of infinite justice; therefore, as you would not take a cup of poison to destroy yourselves, as you would not eat and drink damnation to yourselves, and bring down the guilt of the blood of Christ upon your head, do not dare to venture to this holy table; for "he that eats this bread, and drinks this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." And if you will venture notwithstanding, remember, though you have got a token from me, or any person else, your blood is upon your own head, if you find yourself now debarred, and yet come to trample upon the blood of the Man that is God's Fellow.*

(To be concluded in our next.)

* It is to be borne in mind that, in Scotland, where this Sermon was preached, the Lord's Supper is usually administered but once a year; and that the system being there parochial, and different from our dissenting churches, warnings and admonitions about coming to the Lord's table were suitable there which are scarcely applicable to members of Particular Baptist churches. With us, the warnings are more suitable *before* joining the church than *after*. Still the drift and spirit of the above admonitions are so good, that we have thought it best to insert them in the place which they occupy as appended to the admirable Sermon which we have introduced into our pages.—EDS.

CHANGES.

Dear Sister,—I am going to trouble you again with some of the things that the Lord, in his wise dispensation, has seen fit to hide from the wise and prudent, and reveal unto babes; even so, because it seemed good in his sight.

You know that the Lord has been pleased to put my faith to a severe test by bringing this heavy affliction upon me; and Satan takes advantage of it to stir up all the corruptions of the human heart, to cause me, if possible, to bring a disgrace upon the cause of Christ. But thanks be to his most holy name, he has not been able to accomplish his design yet; and sometimes I believe he never will, because I verily believe I am upheld by the strong arm of Omnipotence, and can sometimes sing, "Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

On the other hand, I am not altogether ignorant of my own weakness and inability, not only to act, but even to think a good thought. I view myself at times a complete mass of weakness, helplessness, ignorance, and confusion; and how I hold on my way in times of temptation, which are so strong and I so weak, I cannot tell, unless it is the Lord, who well knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, that with an unseen hand supports me. Such vile thoughts sometimes arise in my heart, that could you behold them you would shrink back with horror, and say that the very scum and filth of hell lay couched in my breast. I verily "hate vain thoughts;" yet I cannot keep them out, but "like troops from Tema," as one says, "they beset me continually." Self-pity, that plausible deceiver, will at times creep in; and then hard thoughts of God ensue, and I am ready to think the Lord deals hard with me; then fretfulness and peevishness arise, and I am ready to exclaim with Jacob, "All these things are against me." And I have at times felt such language as this to rise in my heart: "If thou deal thus with me, take me hence, for it is better for me to die than to live." The burden at times seems more than I can bear, for I am ready to sink under it. But I trust the reason I do not sink under it is because the everlasting arms of love and mercy are underneath me.

It is very easy to talk of trusting in the Lord when all things around you go on without a cross, or, as John Bunyan says, when religion walks the streets with silver slippers in the sunshine. But when the soul is compelled to go against wind and tide, it is very trying to flesh and blood; and none but those that are upheld by the arm of the Lord can stand in such trying days. The rest, as the Saviour says, when tribulation arises because of the word, are offended, fall back into the world, and throw off all their religion. When the soul is brought into great straits, and the hand of the Lord seems to go out against it—when providence frowns without, and barrenness of soul is within—when the Lord like an east wind blasts all your prospects, and strips you like a tree without a branch—then it is hard work to trust in him.

You may be ready to say, I have given you a very black account of myself. True, but yet it is only a very faint view; nor do I believe that any man ever did or ever will get to the root of indwelling sin; "yea, who can know it?" saith the Lord. We may get at some faint idea of it by the workings of it, and by what we feel in our own breasts; but, as one says, the best mirror in which to behold the awful nature of sin is in the sufferings of a precious Christ. All this awful evil was infused into our nature in the fall by the prince of darkness; and, as Hart says—

"Propagation spreads the curse,
And man born bad grows worse and worse."

But as there is a company of two armies in the Shulamite, I will endeavour to give you a faint view of the bright side as well as of the black. I travel a great deal in the dark, and many days I go mourning without the sun, at which times I often fear I shall one day fall by the hand of the enemy, that I shall never hold on my way, that I shall at last prove to be nothing but a hypocrite, that I never came in at the gate, that all I have experienced is a delusion, and all from a spark of fire of my own kindling, and that my religion will never carry me with joy through the swellings of Jordan. But O! what wrestlings do these injections of Satan cause in my soul to the Lord in private prayer! what searching and examination of heart! what weighings up in the balances of the sanctuary! Every step of my road retraced, every lifting up and casting down tried, and a heartfelt begging of the Lord for a manifestation of his favour, for one token for good, for one smile from his lovely countenance, for one precious promise to come home with power, for one sip of that river of love the streams whereof make glad the city of God, and for pardon and peace to be sealed home upon my conscience. But still I have my bright shinings, although they are of very short duration, and sometimes long between; yet I do not despair. I am often faint, yet still pursuing; often cast down, but not destroyed.

Sometimes I seem to get into the very bosom of the Lord, and he is pleased to unfold some of his beauty, loveliness, preciousness, and suitability to my heart, and my soul clings to him as the All and in all; a sweet train of heavenly thoughts runs through my soul; my heart glows with love towards his Person, people, and ways; a calmness and serenity take possession of me, and deep humility runs through the whole; a resigning all that I am and have into his dear hands, truly willing to be anything and everything that he would wish me to be; the world is behind my back, and all its glittering vanities trampled on as things of nothing worth. Christ and his great salvation are all my boast, and all my song, and all I desire to know. Weaned from every arm of flesh, my soul breathes after felt communion with the Lord of life and glory. O how sweet at times does he drop into my soul when sitting by my fireside, at my work, on my bed, or walking the street! Tears of joy flow down my cheeks, love

and gratitude flow out of my heart, my soul falls a willing captive, and crowns him Lord of all. Such undeserved goodness, O how it captivates my soul, and makes me forget the trials of the way! Fain would my soul leave her clay tabernacle and fly to his embraces, bathe in his love, enjoy his smiles, and see his lovely face without a veil between.

O may you and your people cleave close to the Lord with full purpose of heart! for salvation is in his name. Every covenant blessing is treasured up in him; and everything that you and I can possibly need in time and eternity is to be found in the Person of the God-Man Mediator. He is the one thing needful, the treasure hid in the field, and the pearl of greatest price. The Lord grant that you may seek for him as for hidden treasure, and may you never rest satisfied until you embrace him in the arms of living faith as your Lord and your God. This will bear you up through all the trying scenes of life, carry you safe into that rest that remaineth for the people of God, where the inhabitants "shall no more say, I am sick, for the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquities." No sin, no tempting devil, no treacherous heart, no alluring world shall be known there; and sorrow and sighing shall for ever flee away.

Give my best respects to all inquiring friends. Meanwhile, I remain, your unworthy brother in the path of tribulation,

THE PLOUGHMAN.

OBITUARY OF MRS. OGDEN, OF LEICESTER.

[In the following Obituary, the first part contains some account of the experience of Mrs. Ogden, drawn up by her own hand, and found after her decease; the latter part a memorial of her last days, written by her husband.]

From childhood I had at times fears of going to hell; but as I was brought up in Arminianism, (which had a most hardening effect on my conscience, for from constantly hearing it proclaimed that Jesus stood with open arms ready to receive all that would come unto him, and that all might come if they would,) I thought I need not think of coming yet; "I will come," I said to myself, "when I am old, or if I should be ill; Christ is waiting to receive all that come at all times, so he certainly will receive me then." Such was the hardening tendency of an offered gospel to my soul.

Early in life I married; and my dear husband not liking an Arminian ministry, we attended at a Particular Baptist chapel. Here fears of death and judgment at times fell upon me; but as the cares of this life increased with me, so did my carefulness after the things of time and sense increase also; but often in the midst of my cares the words would come, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon; no man can serve two masters." I was now approaching a time of trial, and received a letter from a friend telling me to cast all my care on the Lord, and then all would be well; and to remember the gracious promise, "As thy day is, thy strength shall

be." And truly I did try to cast my care on him, and as truly found I was unable, which sank me very low. Oh, I thought, no one ever had so bad a heart as I; I cannot cast my care upon the Lord, if I might have the world; so that gracious promise is not for me, because I cannot cast my care on him. O! I fear he has given me up to a hard heart! I began now to feel that it was not whether I *would* come to Jesus, but whether I *might*. But I thought that I would be more regular in prayer, and reading the Scriptures, and also would set myself to learn a portion of God's word every morning, on which I might meditate during the day, and also attend the public means regularly, in hopes that the Lord would accept me.

I went on in this way some time, when a friend lent my husband two or three numbers of the *Gospel Standard*, when the words, "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded," which I saw over a piece, were riveted upon my mind, and greatly perplexed and distressed me. I now saw that the Lord had a people chosen from the foundation of the world; which sank me very low, as I felt sure I could not be one of them, for I thought it was not possible the Almighty could think of me, so vile, sinful, and insignificant as I was, and wished I had been a beast, or anything that had no soul to be saved; for I thought I could endure the miseries of this life for a season, but who can dwell in everlasting burnings? I could not open my mind to any one, but asked a friend's opinion about the words, "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded;" but he thought it referred to the Jews only, and directed my attention to the passage, "Seek, and ye shall find, knock, and the door shall be opened unto you." But the more I sought, the more I appeared lost. Sometimes I could not pray, and when I read the Scriptures I could not understand them; and sometimes I was tempted to believe there was no God nor devil, heaven nor hell, but in my own confused imagination; sometimes feeling very miserable, and then not feeling much of it for a time.

One Sabbath morning, however, a stranger preached at the chapel where we then attended. His text was, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned;" and he said that the Lord had a people chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, who received the things of the Spirit of God. He spoke much also upon the doubts, fears, temptations, and perplexities of the people of God. This was a great encouragement to me, as he was led to name most that I was exercised with. In the afternoon I was enabled to pray to the Lord to give me another token for good if I was in the election of grace; but I arose from my knees oppressed and dejected, and thought the Lord would not appear for me, and I was one of the "blinded" after all. But "as the heavens are high above the earth, so are his thoughts higher than our thoughts, and his ways than our ways;" an old hymn-book lay before me, which I was led to open, when these words arrested my attention:

"Now, Lord, I would be thine alone,
And wholly live to thee;
But may I hope that thou wilt own
A worthless worm like me?"

"Yes! though of sinners I'm the worst,
I cannot doubt thy will;
For if thou hadst not loved me first,
I had refused thee still."

The last verse removed my doubts and fears, and was indeed a token for good, so that "I wept to the praise of the mercy I found," and rejoiced in this some weeks, but afterwards began to fear that it was only natural excitement.

About this time I heard Mr. Warburton, at Ebenezer Chapel. He spoke of the deceitfulness of the heart, and I felt he painted mine in its true colours; but I could take no comfort, as I again feared I was not elected. But from this time I could not with comfort hear any but a free-grace gospel, consequently I wandered about from one place to another where I found the truth was preached, and rejoiced to hear that Mr. H. was going to build a chapel for the truth, but was again disappointed, as there was no regular minister there, and I could not for some time attend the reading through prejudice. Here I heard Mr. B., on the words, "The servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the son abideth ever." I thought I was nothing but a servant, and felt convinced there was a secret which I knew nothing about, consequently I had no right to any promise; and I felt the truth of the words,

"True religion's more than notion;
Something must be known and felt."

Mr. M'K.'s sermon on "The Sealing of the Spirit" revived my hopes, and brought back to my mind the tokens for good that the Lord had given me, (which I had completely lost,) which I thought, if not sealing, surely were tokens for good; and I now felt sure where the Lord had begun a good work he would carry it on. One Sabbath morning, the 13th of August, 1843, I felt a most intense hungering and thirsting for the love of God to be manifested to my soul, accompanied with a hatred and detestation of myself as a sinner. I opened the Bible, and the words presented themselves, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." When I laid the book aside, O, I thought, that promise is to the Lord's own people, and not for me, so vile as I am; and I thought it impossible with justice and a holy God, that this promise could be fulfilled in me. As I was on the road to chapel, I said, I shall certainly go to hell; there is no escaping; and as I truly deserve it, I will tell all the devils in hell that God is perfectly just in sending me there.

But when that man of God, Mr. Warburton, senior, gave out the words as a text, "Hear me, O Lord, for thy loving kindness is good; turn unto me, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies," I was enabled to repeat them again to the Lord in earnest prayer; and immediately such joy and peace flowed into

my soul that I mentally exclaimed, "O Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." What I then felt I can never express. My sins were all gone; I truly could triumph over death, and say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" It was with difficulty I could keep my seat for joy and weeping, for "I looked for hell, he brought me heaven." This was the day on which the church first partook of the ordinance of the Supper in Trinity Chapel. I said, "This people shall be my people, and their God my God," and promised the Lord that at the next public ordinance of baptism I would offer myself as a candidate. I now felt so completely happy, that I could scarcely do anything but bless and praise God. On the following Wednesday night there was a very violent storm of thunder and lightning; and when I awoke on Thursday morning I was led to meditate on the almighty power and majesty of God, whose voice alone shook heaven and earth; and sang, "Gracious God, how can it be that thou, in whose sight the heavens are not pure, can dwell in a polluted heart like mine? Yet thou hast said their bodies shall be the temple of the Holy Ghost. Dear Lord, how can it be that thou canst dwell with a vile, polluted wretch like me?" And the answer came immediately, "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee." And I said, "Oh, my blessed Jesus! my precious Jesus! surely thou dost kiss me with the kisses of thy lips;" and that beautiful verse of Watts's came to my mind:

" My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
And sing and weep herself away
To everlasting bliss."

This was a time of love indeed to my soul; the ordinances of the Lord's house were my delight, and our little reading meetings were often made to me a blessing indeed. But in a few months my enjoyments began to decline, and I became filled with confusion and suspicions that I had never had a law work, and that all my enjoyments had been but natural excitements. A dear friend, who knew my feelings respecting baptism, now came to inform me that that ordinance would take place in a week or two. Here was another conflict; for if my suspicions were true, I was but a hypocrite; but I felt I could not give all up as delusion, consequently I thought, if I refuse to submit to this ordinance, some heavy judgment from the Almighty will fall upon me. In this state of mind I agreed to meet the church the following Sabbath; but when the time came, I was so filled with doubts and suspicions as to what I truly was, that I could not attend.

But afterwards feeling some encouragement from the word of God, and from conversation with some of the friends, another time was fixed, and I was enabled to state the way in which the Lord had led me, and was accepted; when immediately it was suggested to me that the church was completely deceived in me, for I had never begun right, and should not stand, but should bring sorrow

disgrace on the cause. I was therefore greatly harassed and perplexed, and the nearer I approached the time for the ordinance, the more my darkness increased; and I scarce knew how I got through, as I thought I should certainly bring some disgrace on the cause, and the enemy kept telling me I had not begun right, and should not stand, and that all was a delusion.

In the afternoon we partook of the Lord's Supper; but my accuser was there also. "Ah," said he, "you are a member of the church on earth it is true, but that will not make you one in heaven." Truly it was a day of darkness to me. The day following, my soul was enabled to plead with the Almighty in earnest, and with bitter cries, that he would appear for me; and these words came very sweetly: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." This was a token for good, and I could praise him for it; for "I was brought low, and he helped me." After this, as I was going along an unfrequented street, a sweet feeling came over me. I thought how quiet and serene is this place! surely the Lord is near and I knew it not; and these words came: "The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold." This was a blessing indeed. I thought I should never doubt the goodness of God to my soul again, and I rejoiced with joy unspeakable; but after a time, the Lord again left me, and I returned to my own place, for of myself I can do nothing. I at times was full of doubts and fears, and my heart as hard as adamant; no feeling in attending the means, which used to be my delight, and now, even if I did get a little melted, it was directly suggested it was nothing but natural excitement, and so I was robbed of my comfort; for truly Hart says,

"With some the tempter takes
Much pains to make them mad;
But me he found, and always held
The easiest fool he had."

My dark state of mind at the ordinances was a great perplexity to me, as I could not hear of any one like me; this I was tempted at times to believe was another evidence against me. In this uncomfortable state of mind I went on a long time, in and out, like the door on its hinges, so hard and unfeeling; and it being suggested to me that it was only mocking God for me to pray, I in a great degree left off private prayer and reading the Scriptures, and the cares and anxieties of this life occupied most of my attention. But still I regularly attended the public means, and through mercy alone was kept from backsliding outwardly, and felt at times a sort of grief that I could not grieve truly.

I experienced now that "to be carnally-minded is death," and often felt condemned by the word, "If the salt have lost its savour; wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and trodden under foot of men;" but still I had earnest desires after God at times that he would appear.

About this time I perceived a small substance in my breast,

which I felt an impression would prove a cancer, but did not name it to any one until it began to increase in pain and size; and I then named it to my dear husband, who immediately sent for a skilful surgeon, who at first said it was a cancer, but after examining it two or three times gave it as his firm opinion it was nothing but a tumour, which in time he believed would again decrease, and ultimately disperse. But in a very short time it proved a confirmed cancer. This, however, did not move me, for my heart felt as hard as a flint, and could not love Jesus. I felt myself a vile, polluted wretch,

“Without the power to act or will.”

Truly I felt “in me dwelleth no good thing;” and the words, “He that loveth not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed,” were continually condemning me. In this miserable state I long abode; and as my bodily affliction increased, my trouble respecting my spiritual state increased also, for I now began to fear that the Lord had given me up to a hard and unfeeling heart, for I had no changes, and could see others obtain the blessing, while I was always sent away empty. Pain now kept me from attending the means so regularly as I had hitherto done; and my darkness kept increasing upon me, so that I was at times tempted to believe there was no God; and sincerely did I wish I had never made a profession of religion.

The words, “I will send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie,” abode fearfully on my mind; and I came to the determination that I would say nothing to any one respecting my feelings, as I feared being a stumbling-block in the way of others; but would, if possible, quietly (at least) accept the punishment due to my sins, if I sank to hell, which I feared I should. In this state of mind I went to the afternoon prayer-meeting, and afterwards stayed with some of the friends. During conversation, one of them was speaking of a friend who was similarly afflicted with myself, and that when it was made known to her it was a cancer, she felt there was no hope, but that it sent her to the Lord, and he appeared and blessed her in her soul, and she could say, “Thy will be done.” I felt this to make a great impression on me, as it was just what I wanted; and I said to myself, “Does the Lord change? No! ‘The Lord changeth not, neither is his ear heavy, that he cannot hear.’ Who can tell but he may yet appear for me? at least, I’ll try;” and I felt great desires going up to the Lord, and was not without hope that he would appear.

But when I got home, and had retired for rest, I sank much lower than ever, as I thought my sins were so great that they must sink me to a never-ending hell. My pain was great both in body and mind. I knew not what to do, and I cried out, weeping, “Oh, I am lost!” when my dear husband immediately said, “Oh, no, you are not lost; you love Jesus!” “No!” I replied, “I cannot love Jesus!” “But,” said he, “you wish to love him.” Truly I did wish to love him; but hell appeared to be my justly-merited

doom. I felt I was worse than the devil himself, for he had never sinned against redeeming love. As David says, "The terrors of hell gat hold upon me, I found trouble and sorrow. I said in my haste, all men are liars." Oh! why did they receive me into the church? The following evening Mr. I. was coming to preach, and I was enabled to wrestle with the Lord that he would make him that night a true prophet of the Lord to my soul, that he might be as God's mouth, and if there was hope for me, that he would lead him to speak especially to me. Truly I felt something of the spirit of the words, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." And on my way to chapel I felt a most intense panting after Christ, and immediately I thought, "Is it not astonishing that such a vile wretch as I should pant for Christ? Surely this is a token for good." The words of Mr. I.'s text were, "The humble shall see it, and be glad, and your heart shall live that seek God;" and truly I was made glad, for he was led so specially to enter into my feelings, and bring me answers of peace, that if I had named to any of the friends the feelings I had passed through, I should have said that they must have told him.

In speaking of the affliction, he said, "The affliction which you are accepting as the punishment of your sins, which you feel merit hell, is truly a sanctified affliction, and comes from a gracious Father, not in wrath but in love; but you pant for Christ. Is it not astonishing that such a vile wretch as you should pant for Christ? But God says, 'The beasts of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls.'" Truly I felt there was much treasure in an earthen vessel that night to my soul, and came away blessing and praising the Lord for the affliction, and the way which he had led me. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name; for I was brought low and he helped me; he brought me out of the horrible pit, and out of the miry clay; set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings;" and as my afflictions increased, so did my consolations also.

The 116th Psalm was a blessed portion to my soul. Truly "I found the word, and did eat it, to the joy and rejoicing of my soul." The promises appeared all for me, and never were the Scriptures so exceedingly precious. Oh, I thought, if the Scriptures are true, truly I am a vessel of mercy. Oh, why me, why me, while thousands are left to perish? Oh, amazing grace, that I should be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation! Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of glory, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give unto me, and not to me only, but to all those that love his appearing.

Oh! what an abundant entrance into glory I had from the last sentence, for his appearing to my soul seemed better than life, more precious than my vital blood. My joy has not been so great this last day or two, and I feel my enemies lively and strong, yet am I enabled to rely upon his word, for he rests in his love; and I feel my poor tabernacle is fast decaying, but when the heart and flesh fail, the Lord will be my life and my portion for ever. Oh, may

he give me patience to endure all the pain he has appointed for me, with resignation to his will in all things, and to him be the glory.

The sufferings of my dear wife from first to last were the most intense and grievous that could be well imagined; but I believe from the bottom of my heart, that not a murmuring word ever escaped her lips. She would sometimes say, "What are my sufferings to what my dear Jesus underwent for my accursed sins?" This affliction kept increasing until her blood became one mass of cancerous humour, and ended only with her death.

I shall now present the reader with the last scene of her sufferings while here below. A short time before her death, after enduring many days of darkness, in which the enemy suggested to her that all her religion was a delusion, and that she never had a work of grace begun in her soul, it pleased the Lord, whilst I was reading and talking to her by the bedside, to dart a bright ray of hope into her mind; and she exclaimed, "Well, who can tell but that after all I may be right? and I do think now all is right. Bless and praise the Lord for this!" Her faith and consolation continued for some days, after which she again sank very low in her feelings, until on the Sunday morning before her death, whilst I sat at breakfast, the nurse being up-stairs, my attention was suddenly aroused by hearing an unusual noise. Always fearing the worst, I immediately ran up stairs, and to my great surprise and pleasure found her sitting up in bed, shouting, "Bless his precious name! he has come again! The enemy is a liar. He told me that Jesus would not appear again; but he has come; and I can face Satan, and tell him that he is nothing but a deceiver!" She continued in the most exalted strains to call upon her soul, and all that was within and about, to praise the Lord, and said, "Come, all that are here, help me to shout his praises." On observing me she said, "John, I hope you will go to heaven!" Then turning to her mother, she said, "Mother, the Methodists are on a rotten foundation, it is a damnable doctrine. Christ is a whole Saviour, not a half one, and a Saviour, too, before the foundation of the world; all that are given to him were given before time began." After reading, prayer was offered up by a kind friend that came to see her. She then called upon us all to sing a hymn, in which she joined; and though she could scarcely be heard for some days previously only in a whisper, she sang so loud that her voice was much higher than any of the others. At length her strength failed her for a short time, but in a few hours she again resumed her favourite strain, and wished some friends that belonged to the chapel to be sent for, and said, "I will tell them what great things the Lord has done for my soul."

Many kind friends soon came to surround her dying bed, and they best can tell what a wonderful display of almighty power was put forth on her behalf. As for me, at that time my grief was too great to remember one-tenth of the joyous exclamations she

uttered. She continued in this happy frame of mind until Tuesday, when the untiring foe of God and man came again with his horrid and infernal suggestions; but blessed be the name of the Lord, it did not last long, for she was soon enabled to say, "The enemy has now nothing to do with me; he is a conquered foe; tell all the friends what the grace of God can do. Patience," she said; "I sometimes think it hard to arrive at the very portals of heaven, and then to be sent back. I thought last night that I really was passing into such indescribable brightness, much above the brightness of the sun, and expecting I was going. I longed to tell you, but could not; but I was sent back again for a short time." I said, "My dear, I really think I shall be able to rejoice that the Lord has taken you out of this wilderness." She replied, "I hope you will." She then gave me a placid smile, and said, "I can laugh at death." I said, "Death has lost its sting with you." "Oh yes," she replied; "but notwithstanding, dying is hard work." She then remained very quiet and happy until about ten o'clock in the evening, when she became very restless, and had great difficulty in breathing, until about two o'clock in the morning, when her tongue was again set at liberty, and she began to shout, "Victory! I am going, I am going! Victory! Victory! Call him (meaning myself) to help me to shout Victory!"

When I went into the room, her eyes were sparkling with joy, and she exclaimed, "Victory! victory! Oh help me to shout Victory through the blood of the Lamb! Now," she said, "you see what the power of God's grace can do! No more sorrow, no more pain, no more sin! I shall live and reign with God, eternally shut in. Oh! what a shutting in is that! 'The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.' Whoever denies election denies the whole truth of the Bible. Bless his precious name! I shall soon be with him, shouting Victory! Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. I want so to be gone!" I then said, "All earthly ties with you are now broken." "Yes," she said, "all snapped asunder and gone! Feel my pulse, and see how long you think I shall be." I did so, and assured her that it was beating regularly, at which she seemed much disappointed, and told me I did not understand it.

She then said, "I shall not talk much longer," and began to be very calm; a sweet smile hung upon her countenance. But O! no tongue can tell the dreadful struggle she was called upon to endure with the great enemy of souls! Well she might say, "I am under great power;" the power of the enemy on the one hand, and the greater power of God on the other. She then said to the nurse, "Fetch me a cup of cocoa." The nurse having brought it, she said, "The devil has just said, 'Now you are going to have a cup of cocoa, when I will have another stroke at you, and it will be a stroke indeed;' but," she said, "I will deceive him, I will not touch it—set it down. Now, Mrs. Bent," she said, (that was the name of the nurse, of whose kindness and attention I feel happy to be a witness,) "do you leave the room."

She went outside the door, and listening, she heard her say, "Now Mrs. Bent is gone, but you are not gone. I did not think you would have come again, but this is your hour. Now you can deny almost anything, can you deny this, 'None but Jesus can do helpless sinners good?' I hate you, Satan, you know I hate you." The nurse went in and said, "I thought you would have been still when I was gone." "It is that devil, nurse, that plagues me. I hate him."

Her speech then left her; and on perceiving a stillness, her mother went up stairs; I was below. A solemn silence prevailing, I immediately went up, and found her dying. I sat upon the bedside, took hold of her hand, watching her pulse, (which left her about eight minutes before her death,) and looking stedfastly on her countenance, I perceived the conflict with the enemy was still going on. She suddenly became calm and placid, and looking at me, she exclaimed, "I am going—I am going—to live for ever!" and immediately expired.

Thus departed, from the Church Militant to the Church Triumphant, one of the best of wives, the best of mothers; but infinitely more than all, a true and faithful servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, with whom she is now living and reigning in eternal bliss, and everlasting happiness. "The memory of the just is blessed."

J. O.

We subjoin a letter written by a friend who visited her shortly before she died.

On Lord's day Mrs. O. sent for me. When I entered the room, about nine o'clock in the morning, her countenance shone with great joy. She said, "I have sent for you to assist me in praising the Lord for his great goodness to a worthless wretch like me. I have neither strength nor power sufficiently to express his goodness shown to me. I have been saying, 'Why, gracious Lord?' I can only say because he *would* love a vile wretch, as I feel myself to be. Praise his holy name! I want you to sing." I said, "What shall we sing?"

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow?"

"No; that is too weak to set forth his love in saving me—vile me, the chief of sinners."

Several hymns were then read to her. She made choice of Hymn 103, Gadsby's Selection:

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness."

The third verse she wished to be repeated; and sang louder than any of us. Then were read Psalm ciii. and Rev. xxii. She said, "I have been looking back at my past life; and I cannot think I have done one good thing for my blessed Saviour; and yet his love how great to me!" She said, "My soul is so filled with love to my precious Saviour! I am jealous of his honour. If any one were to speak lightly of him and his redemption, it would wound my soul. O how great his love to me! I looked for hell; he brought

me heaven. I looked for condemnation; and he has given me justification. How Satan is disappointed that my gracious Lord should so favour me, the vilest wretch out of hell, the chief of sinners! never was any one more vile executed. Oh my unbelieving heart, that ever I should harbour such unbelieving thoughts of my blessed Lord, and doubt his faithfulness! Do you think Satan will be suffered to tempt me again? I hope not; he is a conquered enemy. Tell all my friends that I shall be glad to see them and to help me praise the Lord for his goodness!" She now felt her bodily weakness; and I left her. In the afternoon she addressed them with a smile and said, "Help me to praise the Lord for what he has done for me, the chief of sinners. Never doubt of his mercy. Never dishonour God by unbelief; for I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!"

She then requested a friend to read and pray, and wished—

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,"

to be sung, which will not soon be forgotten by those who witnessed it. At another time she would repeat,

"Weary of earth, myself, and sin,
Dear Jesus, set me free;
And to thy glory take me in,
For there I long to be."

She said, "The good Lord just gave me strength to repeat it." At another time she said,

"Soon I shall be safely landed
On the shores of heavenly bliss,
And I shall, with joys expanded,
See my Jesus as he is."

On Thursday, she sang by herself,

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
And gladly sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

The same night she wished me to read Romans viii., and call the family to prayer, after which I saw her no more.

Leicester, December 21, 1847.

V.

EDITORS' REVIEW.

A Protest Against the Doctrines, "That a Child of God cannot Backslide; That the Lord does not Chastise his Children for Sin; That Sin in the Thought of the Heart is as Offensive to God as Sin in the Outward Action." By JOHN KERSHAW.—Groombridge, London.

The Apostle Jude, writing to those who "are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called," exhorts them that they "should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3.) But if this earnest cou-

tion is thus scripturally incumbent upon *all* that have been "called" with a holy calling, surely it is doubly so upon those whom the Lord has raised up to preach the gospel—his ministers, his labourers in the word and doctrine, his ambassadors, his watchmen, his shepherds, his prophets, his witnesses. By all these divine titles bestowed upon them, and by all the offices contained in, and implied by these divine titles, are the ministers of the gospel bound earnestly to contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

But in obeying and acting upon this divine precept, it will be found that this earnest contention divides itself, for the most part, into two main branches: 1. A contending *for* truth; 2. A contending *against* error. The former we consider the primary and more important branch; the latter, secondary and subsidiary. The former is *always* necessary, the latter at certain times and seasons; the former is indispensable under *all* circumstances, the latter as circumstances may require. Let us explain ourselves a little more fully, as it has a bearing upon the sermon before us.

The work of the ministry is, in the New Testament, frequently compared to the erecting of a building, (the word "*edify*," of such frequent occurrence in the Epistles, we need scarcely observe, meaning literally, to build, or make a house.) Thus the Apostle Paul speaks of Christ's giving "apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the *edifying* (or building up) of the body of Christ." (Eph. iv. 12.) So, "he that prophesieth (or preacheth) speaketh unto men to *edification*;" (1 Cor. xiv. 3;) that is, "to build them up on their most holy faith." (Jude 20.) Thus also the same apostle says to the Corinthians, "Ye are God's *building*;" and calls himself "a wise *master-builder*." (1 Cor. iii. 9, 10.) Now the main office of a builder is to build the house. To demolish, to pull down, to remove rubbish, to wheel away soil, is necessary too, absolutely necessary, but only so far necessary as is required for the furtherance of the main object—the building itself.

Now two cases may occur, in both of which to pull down is as absolutely necessary as to build.

1. Suppose that an old ruined tenement, all rents and fissures, which has been patched and mended for hundreds of years, and patched and mended in vain, occupy the site of the projected mansion, must it not be wholly cleared away before the new building can be erected in its place? What is man's righteousness but this old rent and ragged, patched and mended, ruinous tumble-down of a building? A minister of truth, then, must in this case pull down, instrumentally, the old Adam tumble-down ruin, with all its Arminian patchings and mendings, that the fair and beautiful temple of grace may be built upon its site. Let a minister, then, be placed in a dark town and neighbourhood, where the gospel has been but little preached, it will be needful for him to contend earnestly *against* Arminian error, as well as to contend earnestly *for* doctrinal truth.

2. But take another case. Suppose the old Arminian building

demolished, and that a wise master-builder has laid the foundation, which is Jesus Christ; suppose, too, the first course well built up, and that in a workmanlike manner; but suppose that by any means leprous stones have become introduced into the building. (Lev. xiv.) The master-builder may not at first perceive what has been done. "The hollow strakes, greenish or reddish," may not have come out at first; for as "in sight they are lower than the wall," they generally at first escape notice. (Lev. xiv. 37.) But suppose the hollow strakes begin to appear; and, what is worse, the plague should show evident marks of spreading in the house, infecting the other stones; the builder, after he has removed the most deeply tainted portions, may try, as divinely directed, what a good scraping may do, if the infection be not very deep. But what if all his attempts do not succeed? and suppose, after he has taken away the infected stones, and scraped the walls, the plague do not diminish, but become a fretting leprosy in the house; is not his duty clear? Is he not to break down what has thus become infected, and carry the stones forth out of the city into an unclean place? Thus far our parable;* now for its application.

Our highly-esteemed friend, the late Mr. Gadsby, laboured in word and doctrine at Manchester for many years, and there "contended earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." In doing this he had, 1. To contend *for* truth; and, 2. To contend *against* error.

In his early days, his main contention was against Arminian errors. In doing this, he (instrumentally) demolished the old tumble-down building of free will and creature righteousness—all, however, subservient to his main, his all-important drift, to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified, and thus build up the temple of grace. But in his latter days, errors of a different character appear to have crept in. Judging from the "Protest" which Mr. Kershaw seems felt called upon to make, and from the circumstance that it has been printed at the request of the church, we may fairly assume that there has been of late years an influx of erroneous doctrines, and that they still continue to prevail. And it would appear from the same evidence that the abuse of grace, Antinomian perversions of the gospel, loose licentious notions, and corresponding practice and conduct, have come in the place of the old Arminian errors. If, then, to resume our figure, any of the stones in his church had become leprous and were infecting others, what could the late Mr. Gadsby do but remove the former, and scrape the latter? And if after a time he found the taint not upon the surface only, but deeply engrained into the very core of these also; how else could he consistently act than to remove these too from the building altogether?

He, poor dear old man, has finished his course—gone down to the grave with a broken heart, and his tenderest feelings wounded in the house of his friends.

* We do not offer the above as an explanation or interpretation of the leprous house, but have used the figure rather in a way of accommodation.

But is the evil still at work? Are pernicious, God-dishonouring principles still secretly spreading? Are the hollow red and greenish strakes reappearing? We are not on the spot, nor in communication with the church, and are therefore only arguing on the assumption that matters are such that "A Protest" is called for, such as now lies before us. But if so, the same remedy would seem to be necessary. The leaders and propagators of these errors it seems useless and hopeless to reason with. Such persons are usually too deeply rooted in error to be convinced. But for the sake of those who are wavering and halting, whose hearts are sounder than their heads, who are entangled in the meshes of sophistry, and desire to be right, but are so puzzled and perplexed by the subtle reasonings of erroneous men that they know not what right is—for the sake of these, whose consciences are tender yet judgment faulty, a simple setting forth of truth and exposure of error may be desirable and profitable. And if so, who is more fit to execute the task than our friend, John Kershaw? Who is so well acquainted with the people and the principles, the circumstances of the case, the spreading of the plague, the danger of infection, and the character and practices of the abettors of the evil, as he? Or who so well knew the mind of the late Mr. Gadsby, or lived so many years in habits of friendship and intimacy with him? And we may add, who is more respected and looked up to by the Church of God in those parts than he?

If, then, on account of the spread of these noxious principles, "a protest" was necessary against them, it seemed to fall to Mr. Kershaw to make it. This "Protest," it appears, he accordingly made in January last; and at the request of the church, he has now sent it abroad.

In reviewing this little work, we shall attempt to steer clear of all the personal matter contained in it; and this for several reasons.

1. Our wish is to exclude all personal matters, as much as possible, from the *Standard*.
2. Not being on the spot, we are but imperfectly acquainted with the circumstances of the case.
3. We can discuss the principles without interfering with persons.

Mr. Kershaw's protest is against three leading errors. These, but especially the two former, we shall consider somewhat at large.

1. It appears that there are those at Manchester who contend that a believer cannot backslide. Mr. Kershaw thus states their opinion:—

"The first is, that a child of God—that is, a good man who is born again of God, and who has been blessed with the fear of the Lord in his heart—cannot backslide.

"Now, this is roundly, boldly, and unflinchingly maintained by certain persons who profess to follow the doctrines and precepts of God's holy word. In the examination of these principles, we shall have to inquire on what they conceive these opinions to be founded, and how far they are consistent with the truth of God. To prove that a child of God cannot backslide, it is argued that a regenerated man possesses two natures, an old man of sin and a new man of grace;

that the old man of sin never made any progress in the divine life nor ever can, consequently that he can never go back from that in which he has never made any advances. It is also contended that the new man of grace never sinned nor ever can sin, so that he likewise can never go back or imbibe the least stain or particle of sin. Now as this is said to be the constitution of a Christian, viz., that the old man of sin never made any advances in the divine life, so that he can never go back, and as the new man of grace cannot sin, the question is, How can the child of God backslide?"

This absurd quibble* reminds us of a similar one made by one of the old Prince-bishops in Roman-Catholic Germany. His episcopal excellency was very fond of hunting; and when a friendly admonition was once given him about the inconsistency of the chase with the mitre, his reply was, "I do not hunt as bishop, but as prince." To which it was answered, "But if the prince should break his neck out a-hunting, and be sent to hell, what would become of the bishop?" The old man and the new are in the same person, and can no more be separated than the bishop and the prince. Whilst, therefore, they are tenants of one bosom, and parts of one man—an *individual*, and therefore indivisible—such quibbles are as worthless as they are absurd. Such wretched quirks and miserable subterfuges may do well to harden men's consciences and stifle every tender feeling; but will the heart-searching God sanction them? Will they be accepted at his bar? Men may drug their consciences with such opiates till they sleep the sleep of death; but they will find one day that God is not mocked, and what a man soweth that he shall also reap. Quibbles about the old man and the new will be poor refuges against Him who is a consuming fire.

Mr. Kershaw has answered this quibble in a sound and scriptural way; but we think that instead of laboriously untying this twisted knot, he had better at once have drawn his sword and cut it asunder. We do not wish to set up our dealing with the question against Mr. Kershaw's, or propose it as a better solution of the quibble than his. We would rather offer it as a simpler and shorter, or if not that, an additional answer. We should treat an advocate of this doctrine thus, supposing we met him on scriptural ground: "Can a child of God sin?" If he say, "No;" then we ask, "Did David sin when he committed adultery? Did Peter sin when he cursed and swore?" If he reply, "These were not sins in them, though they would be in other men, for God sees no sin in his elect;" our reply would be, "The best thing that you can do is to go and live in Norfolk Island, where, in the language of the convicts, 'a good man' means one stained with every crime, and 'a bad man' one who is upright and moral."

But if he admit that a believer can sin, then our answer would

* It is a great mistake to suppose that this is a *new* doctrine, or confined to a few persons or chapels. It is quite an old error; and the quibble on which it is founded is of no recent date, or local neighbourhood. If we are not mistaken, a man named Mulock preached the doctrine near twenty years ago in Oxfordshire and afterwards in the Potteries, and employed to support his views the above absurd argument about the old man and the new.

be, "Why, then, all this quibbling about a word? By *backsliding* we mean that a believer *sins* against God; and if you admit the same thing, the controversy is at an end. But do not wriggle and twist about a *word*. It is the *thing*, the *fact*, that we want to have made clear. Do not say and unsay, shuffle and evade, and hide your real meaning in a cloud of dust."

The real meaning concealed under this paltry quibble is, that the wanderings and departings of a believer from God are not sins. Sifted to the very bottom, that is the real intention of the doctrine against which this sermon protests. It is probable that nearly *all* of its advocates would shrink from such an avowal; and that *some* of them do not intend by it any such meaning. But Satan never cares much about words; and those suit him best which most craftily disguise his meaning. It is *things*, soul-deceiving, soul-damning things which he is intent upon; and so are those heretics and erroneous men whom he seduces. And that this is the real drift of the non-backsliding doctrine is plain from its being coupled with the two other kindred opinions against which Mr. Kershaw's sermon is also directed. Let not, therefore, our eyes be blinded with the mere dust of words, and thus suppose it is a mere verbal controversy. Men do not care much for mere words. Words are but counters, whilst things are coins; but if they can pass off their counters for coins, their purpose is well answered. And yet after all it seems hardly worth while to bestow much pains in exposing this wretched forgery; for such a poor quibble as this is so bungling a piece of workmanship, that it is hardly worth the trouble to bend it round one's finger, or nail it to the counter.

Mr. Kershaw, however, thus weighs it in the balance of the sanctuary, and stamps Tekel upon it:—

"The statement we have just given of the constitution of a child of God is a very superficial notion, falling far short of the true scriptural definition of what constitutes a regenerated man. There are four things here to be considered—

"1. The body.

"2. The soul.

"3. The old man of sin.

"4. The new man of grace.

"In the first creation God formed the body of man out of the dust of the earth, and after it was formed it was an inanimate mass, cold and lifeless. 'The Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.' Here we have man, a creature of God, with a body and a living soul—an immortal spirit, good, upright, and perfect, as first turned out of the hands of the great Creator.

"In man's primeval state we find that he had body and soul, but no old man of sin nor new man of grace. But after the fall, through the disobedience of our first parents, man became subject to the old man of sin, 'which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,' under its domineering power, and was led away captive by Satan, 'the prince of the power of the air,' 'the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.' Thus we have a body, a soul, and an old man of sin, but in this state no new man of grace. A man becomes a new creature only when he is born again of God, and thus made the subject of a divine nature, or a 'new man which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness.' This new man of grace is holy and pure as its divine Author, and neither is nor can be contaminated with sin.

"This being the constitution of a regenerate man, the question arises, In

backsliding, what part of this nature is it that backslides? I grant at once to my opponents that it is not the old man of sin nor the new man of grace. The question, then, still occurs, What is it? I answer, *It is the soul of the Christian.*

"When the soul and body of a good man are plunged into sin, it is under the influence of the old man of sin and Satan. 'Every man is tempted, when he is drawn aside of his own lust and enticed.' (James i. 14.) But those who boldly maintain that the soul of a good man cannot go back, tell us at the same time that to charge the soul of a quickened or regenerated sinner with sinning, 'is nothing short of blasphemy.' Beloved, we have to try this statement, and, like the Bereans, we will 'search the Scriptures to see whether these things are so.'

"Now, the soul of a good man either *can* or *cannot* sin. Let us try, therefore, both sides of the question, and show from the word of God and Christian experience that the soul of the regenerated is sometimes under the influence of the new man of grace implanted by the Spirit, and at other times under the influence of Satan and the old man of sin.

"When the soul is under the influence of the Spirit and grace of God, it is sure to go forward in the divine life and in the means of grace. But when the soul of a child of God is under the influence of sin and Satan, he is sure to go back. Here is the seat and source of the Christian warfare, where 'the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.' And this causes a struggling within; as it is written, 'What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies.'

"It is said that 'in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established.' It will be admitted that David was a good man, for the Lord calls him a man 'after his own heart.' We will, therefore, let David speak on this matter. His soul being under the influence of the new man of grace, he longed to live to the honour and glory of God, and nothing but the Lord could satisfy his soul. Hear what he says: 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?' (Psalm xlii. 1, 2.) 'O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee. My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is.' (Psalm xliii. 1.) 'My soul followeth hard after God.' Are there not seasons, beloved, when you, like David, feel your very heart and soul going out after God in fervent breathings, hungerings, and thirstings after him whom your soul loveth? You want to know more of him as your Saviour and Redeemer; to feel your interest in his love, by having it shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Ghost that is given unto us, and in his precious atoning blood; that you may be found in the Redeemer's robe of righteousness; that you may be found bound up with him in the bundle of life, and be his in that day when he makes up his jewels. Are not your souls at times going out after God, praying that you may be conformed to the image of his Son, that the mind that was in Christ Jesus may be in you, that you may live to his honour and glory the few days you may have to sojourn in this time state, and that the Lord will land you safe in heaven, to be for ever in his presence, where there is 'fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore?'"

As it is our desire and intention, if spared and the Lord will, to enter more fully into the subject of backsliding in our next number, we must defer our remarks upon it till that opportunity. We are indeed sorry to break the thread of our argument; but as the limits of our present number are not sufficient to discuss this important question, we prefer a little delay rather than treat it too briefly and superficially.

(To be continued.)

It is better to pine away in our afflictions, than to be freed from them by sinning.—*Bunyan.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”—Matt. v. 6.

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”—2 Tim. i. 9.

“The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.”—Rom. xi. 7.

“If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”—Acts vii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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VOL. XIV.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER.

(Concluded from page 141.)

But now, lest I should fright any of the children from their food, who are apt to take these things to themselves, more than those to whom they are principally directed, therefore I proceed

3rdly. To a third inference, with relation to this ordinance, that may be drawn from our doctrine, namely; hence we may see the character of those who have a right to approach, and are by God invited thereto; namely, in general all believers who, through grace, have been made to flee into the covert of the blood of the Shepherd, into the covert of the blood of the Man that is God's Fellow, to screen them from the sword of divine wrath. As we dare not for our souls allow or encourage any to approach this ordinance who are unbelievers, under whatsoever names and designations they may be called, so, on the other hand, we dare not for our souls disallow or discourage from this work any, the least, the weakest believer in Christ, that has gone in with the call of the gospel, and embraced this sacrifice whereby justice is satisfied. And therefore, in the name and authority of the same glorious God and gracious Lord, I invite to this table of the Lord all such, whatever their sins have been, though guilty of the sins that I have named, or whatever else—all such, I say, whatever their guilt be, who have taken this gospel method of getting their sin and guilt expiated and removed, namely, by hiding their guilty souls under the wings of Christ's righteousness, who gave

himself a sacrifice to satisfy the sword of justice. But that it may be known more distinctly whom I mean by such believers in Christ as I am calling to the Lord's table, you may examine yourselves more particularly from the doctrine, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat." I hope you that are to communicate as believers have been examining yourselves before this time; but if you be yet in the dark, there are these four marks which may be drawn out of our text and doctrine, for clearing whether you be believers indeed that have closed with the Man that is God's Fellow as a sacrifice to the sword of justice in your room.

(1.) Have you seen, some time or other, the sword of justice awaking against your own souls, the avenger of blood pursuing you? Have you heard such a knell as that in your heart! "Awake, O sword!" awake, O law! awake, O vengeance, curses, and threatenings against a man for his sins? Have you been so filled with the fear of hell and wrath as you have been put to cry, "Men and brethren, what shall I do to be saved?" Or have you been put to more concern about salvation than ever you were about anything else in the world? And have you seen in this case the natural tendency of your heart to rest upon some other thing for peace with God than this sacrifice which Christ offered of himself to the sword of justice? There is a natural inclination in all to rest upon some other thing for peace with God; and it is a good token when it is discovered, and becomes a burden and a ground of a challenge, that they have had a sinful inclination to put duties, prayers, tears, enlargements, and the like, in Christ's room. "'Before the law came I was alive,'" says Paul; "and I thought I had a stock of righteousness in myself to be the ground of my peace with God. 'But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.' When, by the law, I got the knowledge of sin, I died to all conceit of myself and my righteousness. 'What things were formerly gain unto me, these I counted loss for Christ.'" Now, if you have been thus pursued by justice, which you see no sacrifice will satisfy but that of the Man that is God's Fellow, and have been burdened with your natural inclination to some other sacrifice, I think the Lord has begun the good work upon you, and therefore I call and invite you to the table of the Lord.

(2.) Have you seen the glory and excellency of this sacrifice? What a glorious ransom God has found out for his own satisfaction, that thousands of rams could not do it, but that one lamb could do it, even the Lamb of God sacrificed! Have you seen the sword quenching its thirst in the blood of the Lamb? and have you taken up the love and mercy of God in providing such a Lamb, such a ram caught in the thickets, when your neck, like Isaac's, was upon the block? Have you seen him to be a worthy ransom, because of the worthiness of the Person sacrificed, he being God's Fellow, God-man, in one Person, and so acting in his Father's name, and by his appointment, when he yielded obedience to the death, as being his Shepherd whom he sealed for this end? And has the view and apprehension of him in this mediatorial glory drawn forth

your esteem of him and of his offering and sacrifice, so as you could venture heaven and your eternal salvation upon it; so that you desire to say, "To him that loved me and washed me in his own blood, to him be glory?" Is the view of this sacrifice that which cheers and delights you most? And is it matter of wonder to you now and then, that when the stroke of justice was ready to come upon you, Christ should have interposed between you and the fatal, deadly blow? Can you say, "You count all but loss and dung, that you may win Christ, and be found in him;" so that you care not what be cast overboard, if you but get to that shore, even Christ and his righteousness? Then welcome are you to the table of the Lord. I invite you in his glorious name.

(3.) Have you found your souls in safety from the sword of justice under this shadow of the blood of the Man that is God's Fellow? Nothing rightly satisfies the awakened challenges of conscience but that which satisfies the awakened sword of justice; and that is the smiting of the Shepherd, and the blood of the Man that is God's Fellow. Now, have you seen God's justice satisfied thereby, and found your conscience satisfied with the same? Have you some time or other found your soul at peace under this covert of blood, knowing that the sword was put up in its scabbard, it being fully satisfied with the blood of God? This is a being pleased with what the Lord of Hosts is being pleased with; and you have thus, being justified by faith, had peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Where go you when under challenges for sin? For the legalist, he can believe well enough when he has no challenges for sin, but under these challenges his faith fails him. But for you, believer, under all challenges do you find this always your only shift, the blood of Christ, the sacrifice of the Man that is God's Fellow? Is this also your only shift when you think of death, or of appearing before the judgment-seat of God? Do you make such use of Christ's offering to justice, as that it is your constant desire to put Christ in your room? Is the language of your soul, "O! I desire no accounting and reckoning with justice; nay, I dare not count and reckon with Christ; but my soul, as it were, leaves Christ in its room, and runs away from reckoning with justice, to hide itself under his wings who can count to the utmost farthing?" Dear soul, who has attained to something of this in reality, I invite you, in the Mediator's name, to come to his table.

(4.) Is it oft-times matter of exercise to you, to get over all other sacrifices to this alone, whereby the awakened sword of justice is appeased? Can you say it has been matter of exercise to you, not only how to get over your sins unto Christ, but also how to get over your graces and duties to him, so as you might not trust therein to the prejudice of trusting in Christ? Paul, not only while in nature, but even after conversion, found an inclination to count some things gain beside Christ; and therefore, in opposition to this inclination, he does, with a doubtless, cry down all things, and "count them dung and dross, for the excellency of the knowledge

of Christ," (Philip. iii. 8. 9.) taking in his gracious acting and actions, as well as others, and found a need to cast away the good as well as the bad in point of qualification. Did you ever find it harder exercise to be quit of your duties, tears, and enlargements, in point of dependence, than to be rid of your sins? The believer has one exercise of faith—how to be quit of sin; and another new exercise—how to be freed from resting on duties, and how to be singly engaged in resting on Christ. His mind is not quiet in all his duties till he come hither, even to be found in Christ, to have his peace with God founded on Christ and not upon duties. The legalist, when he gets duties performed, then he has peace; but the believer, though he be about duties a whole day, and is indeed more engaged in duties really than the legalist himself that relies thereon, but let him be about duties a whole day, yet perhaps he has little or no peace, because he would be all over duties to Christ himself, as his resting place; and so he has no peace till he enjoy him to his satisfaction. Hence also he is oft-times full of fears and jealousies, lest, through unbelief, he put some other thing in the room of Christ's sacrifice. A natural man may, perhaps, suspect his duties lest they be wrong, but the believer is more taken up in suspecting his faith, saying, "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief." He dare not trust his own faith, knowing his evil heart of unbelief that he has within him. Well, if this be oft-times matter of exercise to you, poor soul, to get over all other sacrifices and services to this great sacrifice, Christ Jesus, in whom alone the sword of justice is satisfied, I invite you, as a believer, to feast at the Lord's table upon the sacrifice. Does the faith of this sacrifice purify your heart so that you long to be perfectly holy, seeing and lamenting your own unholiness and impurity, and desiring daily to bring your impure sins and lusts to the fountain opened by the sword of justice in the heart of a pierced Christ? I then invite you, in the name of the Lord, to this holy table, as one that has seen the value, and shared of the virtue, and participated of the efficacy of this sacrifice, given by the Man that is God's Fellow to the awakened sword of justice.

In a word, are there any here who, under a sense of sin, see an absolute need of this sacrifice; who, under a sense of their unworthiness, are fearing and trembling to approach to the Lord's table, and yet would give all the world for a share of the saving and healing virtue of this glorious sacrifice, and see nothing in the wide world so fit for them as Christ? I invite them to the Lord's table. Are there any here lamenting the Lord's anger and absence at this day? lamenting that things are so far wrong in the house of God, and that there is so little power and glory of God seen in the sanctuary, and panting after communion and fellowship with him, crying, "'O that I knew where I might find him!' 'O that it were with me as in times past!' O for a heart to love Christ! O for a sealed interest in Christ! O for the healing balsam of the blood of the Lamb, to cure the sad plagues of my heart, which I see to be as black as hell!" O! come and take a drink, poor soul,

at the Lord's table, even a full draught of the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin! Is there any here, any poor creature that sees and laments his own weakness, and the power of sin and corruption in him, pained to the heart with his numberless backslidings from the Lord Jesus? that would gladly have a knot cast between Christ and his soul that may never loose, such strength and grace communicated as that he may never go back from God? I invite you to come forward to the Lord's table, and get a strengthening meal. Perhaps there is some trembling weak believer here, that is doubting whether he has grace or not, whether he be a believer or not. O! cry to the Spirit of God to make it clear to you, by showing to you the things that are freely given you of God. I shall only ask you who are fearing you have no interest in him, no portion in the son of Jesse, the Man that is God's Fellow, Tell me, will you quit your part of him? Could you freely choose to take the world and your lusts, and let others take Christ if they please? Would you find in your heart to rest contented with other things, and give any body your part of Christ? What say you to that, poor doubting soul? Is your heart now melting and relenting within you, and saying, "O minister! what is that you are saying? That wounds me to the bottom of my soul. Quit all my part of Christ! O no, no! If I were sure of my interest in him, I would not quit my part in him for ten thousand worlds; and even as it is, though I dare not assert that I have an interest in him, yet I would not say that I would quit my part in him—no, for all that lies within the bosom of the universe!" Is that the language of your heart? Well, Christ hears that, and he will mind it as a token of some heart-kindness to him. Can you say that God will be just and righteous though he should send you to the bottom of hell, instead of allowing you to sit at this table; and if such a dog as you get a crumb from him, it will be a miracle of mercy? Can you say that though doubts, and darkness, and innumerable evils be now surrounding you, yet, for what you know, it was a day of power you met with at such a time, in which a saving work, as you thought, was begun, and now you would willingly have it cleared up to you? Can you say that though you have a thousand objections against yourself, and your own heart and frame, yet you have no objections against Christ? at least, if any reasonings and high imaginations against him be rising and raging in your heart, that you would gladly take hold of him, that he may cast all down, and take and keep the throne himself? Do you see the way of salvation through free grace, and through his perfect righteousness, to be an excellent way, worthy of God, and suitable to man, becoming the wisdom and glory of God, and that you are well-pleased with this way? Can you, finally, say that you are one of the poorest creatures in all the world; poor and needy, destitute of all good, of all grace, of all faith, love, repentance, holiness, and any other spiritual quality in yourselves; but that you see an infinite fulness in Christ that can supply you, and out of which you desire to be supplied with all that

you need? and you can appeal to heaven, that in Him only you desire to be found who is "all in all?" Can you say Yea and Amen to these things? Then, poor soul, I charge and command you, in the name of the Lord of Hosts, to venture forward to this table, as you would not displease him and grieve his Holy Spirit by staying away, when he calls and commands you to do this in remembrance of him, and of his kindness to you.

[The Sermons from which we have selected the preceding were preached in the year 1750, in Dunfermline, Scotland. We have omitted several paragraphs, and have also taken the liberty of altering some expressions, as they are somewhat obscure, and not suitable to the present day. The author was born in Monilaws, Northumberland, March 15, 1685, and died in Dunfermline, Nov. 6, 1752. He lived during a time that the Scotch Church was much persecuted, but none of his sermons were expressly on that subject, displaying that the religion of the Son of God had too much power in his soul to suffer him to dread imprisonment for his Master's sake. Where should we, where would our readers be, were such to be again permitted of the Lord?—Eds.]

GOD FAITHFUL TO HIS PROMISES; BEING OUR ONLY REFUGE IN DARK AND TRYING TIMES, OR IN AFFLICTIVE PROVIDENCES.

By JOHN RUSK.

(Continued from page 133.)

What, then, is it to do good? I answer that question under fourteen particulars.

1. The first thing in doing good is *to cry, groan, entreat, beg, long, sigh, crave, and besiege a throne of grace* till I get the whole current of Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, on my side the question—till I am at a point about my state and till I feel perfect love to cast out and keep out all slavish fear and torment. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Christ "spake a parable to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint." Say you, "I have been so long at this that I have no heart." "In due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not." "Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him? I tell you he will avenge them speedily," though it appear long to them. You shall go on with this till a throne of grace instead of a duty will be a privilege; and as you gain by trading—"for godliness with contentment is great gain"—you will in time approach him as a reconciled Father. And what terror or dread is there in a child asking what he wants from a tender, loving Father? Now this is really doing good. "But it is good for me to draw near to God," that is, by humble prayer; and David knew it, for he had left many cares and burdens with the Lord his God by repeated experience.

But it may be asked what is implied in drawing near to God? I answer, It implies that sin is removed, (not the *inbeing* of sin,) for nothing can keep us at a distance but sin; but when the atone-

ment is applied, then "we are made nigh by his blood, who were afar off by wicked works." It proves, too, that I am a partaker of the Spirit of God; "for through him we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Then notice the following things in your approach to a throne of grace. Never dream of worth or worthiness, for all that we pray for is a free gift. I might mention fifty things that a sensible sinner wants, but one will take in all, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ; and he is a free gift. "God so loved the (elect) world, that he gave his Son;" and he has promised "to keep him and give him for a covenant to the people." Then pray for Christ to be formed in you.

And when you feel yourself at a great distance, do not skulk off from a throne of grace till guilt has worn off the wrong way. Remember, God calls at such times for confession. Sometimes you may begin against wind and tide, but the blessed Spirit will suddenly give you power to confess; as David says, "I poured out my soul to God, I showed him my trouble," and it is "he that confesseth and forsaketh his sin" who is to find mercy. Cloak nothing, but tell the whole; for the deeper discoveries you have of your nature, the more precious will Christ be to you in every covenant character which he sustains.

Again. Plead for Christ's sake; and do not be afraid to ask, as if there was not enough. This God hates. "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." Pray for eternal life, the everlasting love of our most propitious Father, the precious blood of Christ, and a double portion of his Spirit. And if you do not succeed for a long time, do not let that discourage you. Consider what a thing it will be to prevail with God in prayer. Therefore keep at it, though heaven, earth, and hell appear to be against you. You do not know what a blessing you may receive by and by, though for the present everything may seem against you. Look at the Syro-Phœnician woman and Jacob; and remember, none ever sought his face, or called on him in vain. The more you are opposed or discouraged, the more you must press on. No denial will do here. I speak from experience, for I am a living witness of what I am advising you. And when this is the case you will say with David, "It is good for me to draw near to God."

2. When we first set off in our profession, it is a good thing to be well *chastened, afflicted, crossed, tried*; to be sharply exercised with the bondage of a broken law, the weight of our sins, opposition from the world, and to have the fallow-ground of the heart ploughed up. Now Jeremiah tells you this is good: "It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth." But why? Because it discriminates him from hypocrites, who begin where they should leave off; as you read, "They hear the word, and anon with joy receive it;" and they "endure for a while;" but when temptation or persecution arise because of the word, they are offended. You have it again: "And immediately it sprang up, because it had no deepness of earth; but when the sun waxed hot it was scorched, and because

they had no root they withered away." This made Paul say, "Who are they that make me glad, but they that are made sorry by me?"

Then seeing this is the case, what is it to bear the yoke? It is to be convinced of the sin of unbelief. This will be the case when we hear everything suitable, and yet our hearts shut it all out, for we cannot apply anything but reproof. Did you never read this text? "I took the yoke from his jaws and set his meat before him;" for everything of food is brought in by faith: "I am the bread of life," but it is he that eateth that hath everlasting life. Again, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness;" but the righteousness of Christ is to all and upon all that believe; and this is a mystical feeding by faith. Now it is good to bear this yoke of unbelief. David did: "I had fainted unless I had believed." Say you, "Faith is a very easy thing." Yes, such faith as you have, may be, but not the faith of God's elect; for that, Paul says, is "the exceeding greatness of God's power." You want this yoke on you, which would soon put a stop to your presumptuous confidence.

Another reason why it is good to be convinced of unbelief is, because it is so scriptural that all the saints of God ever have gone this way. We may find it in the father of the faithful denying his wife, and in Moses saying, "Shall all the fishes of the sea be slain for this people?" These unbelieving fits he calls his "wretchedness," (Num. xi. 15,) which shows it was a burden to him, and yet Moses was faithful in all God's house. We find in Job also, "If I had called and he had answered, yet would I not have believed." Asaph calls it his "infirmity." And that man, whatever he may be, that unbelief is never any burden to, as God liveth, never had genuine faith. What do you suppose that Paul means by "glorying in his infirmities?" You cannot suppose Paul delighted in sin? No; this is not his meaning; but I think the apostle means as follows: "The more I am sensible of my native hardness of heart, when that is removed, though an infirmity, yet the more grateful am I for a heart of flesh; the more I feel the filthiness of my nature, the more thankful I am for a fountain opened to cleanse me; the more I feel my own weakness, the more (when strengthened with might by God's Spirit) I ascribe the glory to him. Am I a fool? He is the wisdom of God to me. Have I no righteousness? He is the end of the law for righteousness. Am I blind, and ignorant, and much troubled with the old veil, so that I know but in part? At times I am light in the Lord." Take all his troubles in one, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ," &c. This, then, is, I think, the substance of Paul's meaning; as though he should say, "Seeing everything I receive from the fulness of Christ can only be known by its opposite, then, sooner than be without his power, let me be weak; sooner than not walk in Christ as a fountain opened, let me feel my uncleanness;" as though he should say, "I see they must go together, for none but the needy will prize a whole Saviour." But as to glorying in them abstractedly considered, this he never did, and never

could do. Now it is good to bear this yoke of unbelief, for this one reason, that we may know the real value of genuine faith; which is God's work, God's power, God's gift.

1. God's work: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."

2. God's power: "God fulfil in you the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power."

3. God's gift, therefore it is not merited by us: "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."

Now, "the isles are to wait for this law," which shows that it is not so quickly obtained.

Another yoke that is good to bear in our first profession, is the burden of our sins. Why? because Christ came to call none but sensible sinners to repentance; then it is good to bear it at first, for this reason, that the longer we go on without it, the more we are rooted in ourselves, and the more we are like the horse or the mule. But when a man has felt the burden of his sins, and begins to sink in self-despair—when brought there, he soon feels the efficacy of a Saviour's blood, for want of which some, not going so deep, have gone halting all their days. Now Jeremiah calls this a yoke: "The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his hand." Another yoke is the bondage of a broken law. But why is it good to be borne? because Christ's commission is to open the prison doors to them that are bound. Now, when this is felt at first, or in our youth, we know the difference between law and gospel, between a killing letter and a life-giving promise, between a voice of words and the power of God, between a law that commands everything and gives nothing, and the gospel that commands nothing and gives everything. Say you, "Commands nothing!" Yes, it commands nothing of us at all as considered in ourselves; and it is for want of this law-teaching that we have so many mongrel professors, who join law and gospel together; whereas the law is a revelation of the wrath of God, and, by the Spirit's application of it, I am made sensible of its unlimited demands. It condemns me to death as a transgressor, and there leaves me; and this is all it can do. But the gospel is a revelation of the love of God, and is the believer's rule of life; and "as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and on the Israel of God."

Now this bondage arises from our trying to maintain our standing in our nature. The charge is brought against us, but we do not like to fall under it. Hence "the strength of sin is the law;" and this is often found after liberty has been enjoyed, as well as before. When we crawl into ourselves and wish to appear righteous before men, then we feel straitened; for, if we boast, it is as if we had not received, and, therefore, we do not glorify him who alone is worthy. See the case of Job. "I have done this, that, and the other," and afterwards he was fast bound. Pride is the root of it all, and vain glory it is.

The last yoke I shall mention, (having shown the yoke of the

law, which Peter says neither they nor their fathers were able to bear,) is Christ's easy yoke, which consists in parting with all that stands in competition with him, "forsaking father, mother, houses, lands, wife, children, and one's own life." It consists in much opposition: "Five shall be in one house, three against two, and two against three." It consists in denying self, which will ever be calling for some gratification or another; and this is called a daily cross, and brings much scorn and contempt from fools in the world, and fools in a profession where the offence of the cross has ceased. But all this is easy, as we do not run at an uncertainty, nor fight like those that beat the air; and when faith works by love, all the rest is thought but little of; and to speak from experience, I often feel my heart lean to suffer affliction with the people of God. I am not without the feelings of flesh and blood, and know it is bitter to bear; nevertheless there is often a bitter sweet in it, which is better felt than described; when, on the other hand, if things go a little more pleasing, what lightness and levity! How we drink into the spirit of the world, and often say, "A confederacy!" How covetousness begins to work, and we are for looking to this and to that arm of flesh. Reader, when you find the least of this, cry mightily to God before it gets too fast hold of you, and you have to say, "My leanness! my leanness! woe unto me!" This is a pleasing snare of the devil, and you may slide on in it for some time and not so much miss your God; but when the first fiery trial comes, you will discover the cheat, and see how you have been duped. O! I dread worldly prosperity more than anything. It is the death (in general) of the soul, for we are not to be trusted one moment. That is a sweet prayer of Agur's, "Give me neither poverty nor riches." I must say it is a blessed thing after all to be close put to it. My heart leans that way.

Now it is best to bear this yoke at first, for then we are trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

3. This brings in a third thing which is good, and that is, *resignation to the Lord's will* until he shall be pleased to make known his great salvation to us. And this salvation is to be waited for. Now we are saved from the wrath to come, and this comes to us in strict justice through Jesus Christ, who trod the winepress, and fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. Therefore those he never died for shall endure it themselves: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men;" "And my sword shall be bathed in heaven, and come down upon Idumea, the people of my curse, to judgment." But if you have felt salvation from wrath, you have first had a feeling sense of it, that you might know the worth of such a salvation. And therefore he says, "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment." Now, when this is the case, you will feel yourself exposed to the wrath of God, which, under the divine Spirit's teaching, will make you seek earnestly to Christ Jesus for shelter; for "a man shall be a hiding-place from the

storm and a covert from the tempest." And it will not be in a careless trifling way, but earnestly; and two things will be felt when it comes, namely, tender mercies in revealing Christ to you, and then filling you with comfort. For he says, that though he hid his face for a moment, yet with everlasting kindness he will have mercy on you. David calls it "loving kindness," because kindness is a display of it, and "tender mercies," because they come to us through Jesus. Again, comfort. "Thou wast angry with me, but thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold God is my salvation."

We are saved from the reigning power of sin. Say you, "That has often puzzled me, for I have at times found such victory over sin that I could say, 'Lord, the very devils are subject to us through thy name;' but soon after I have felt as if I was led captive by them all." Yes, but you must learn to distinguish between iniquities prevailing and sin having dominion. If sin reigns it will be no burden to you; you will be a willing slave to it; but if the root of it is cut, though it will be continually striving for the mastery, yet you will, by looking to Christ, often find it subdued and kept under; but as to a deliverance from the inbeing of sin, and many sore struggles against it, and often slipping into it, you never will be wholly delivered from these till death. Yet all this may stand with being delivered from the reigning power of sin, and that according to the Scripture, or else what made Paul say, "What I hate that do I, O wretched man that I am?" This is the plague of the heart, and will exercise us all our days; but our victory is in Christ, for "his name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

We are saved also from our enemies and the hand of all that hate us. How many are watching for our halting,—worldlings, hypocrites, and devils, and we are as weak as water, and often think with David, "I shall one day fall by the hand of Saul." We are saved in a temporal sense, from extreme poverty, as David says, "He never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." "Against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue;" and "the very hairs of our head are numbered;" yet we are subject to many heavy trials, but the promise is, "The Lord delivers him out of them all;" and this we affirm, with all confidence, every visit the Lord pays us, we know he does not deal with us as he does with the wicked.

And we are saved from the second death, or the damnation of hell. This is done, 1. By justifying us; for "whom he justifieth, them he also glorifieth." 2. By working faith in our hearts, for "he that believeth shall be saved." 3. By pardoning all our sins, giving us peace, which we know after we close our eyes in temporal death we shall enjoy for ever, for we are to enter into peace. And, 4. Influencing our hearts with perfect love, that casts out all slavish fear; and if we have these things, it is a plain proof we are delivered from the second death, for on such it has no power.

(To be continued.)

GOSPEL LIBERTY.

Messrs. Editors,—“A Lover of Free Grace” seems concerned to know what gospel liberty is. He must recollect that none but God the Holy Ghost can give him a real satisfaction of his interest in it; and until he feels such interest he cannot understand it for himself. But that there is such a thing, may be proved from the word of truth. And if the Spirit of truth does not lead the souls of the Lord’s people into it, he cannot lead into *all* truth. Jesus said, “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John viii. 32.) And, “He, the Spirit of truth, will guide you into all truth.” (John xvi. 13.) And Paul says, “The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” (Rom. viii. 2.) And again: he says to the Galatians, “Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free.” (Gal. v. 1.) This is the testimony of the word.

By the blessing of the Lord, I will try to prove what this liberty is *not* and what it *is*. Liberty is freedom: but it is not a liberty for an occasion to the flesh, for any one to gratify the sinful desires of the flesh, as many do, and say if they are elected they shall be saved, whilst they wallow in sin. It is not a freedom from moral obligation amongst men. Read Paul’s Epistles to Timothy and Titus. It is not a freedom from obedience to gospel precepts, from walking in the Lord’s ordinances, from watchfulness and prayer, baptism, and the Lord’s Supper. It is not freedom from using all lawful means to pass through this world in all godliness and honesty. It is not a freedom from the most painful trials in body, and mind, and circumstances. It is not freedom from a body of sin and death, from powerful temptations of the devil, from most awful thoughts injected into the mind, nor from many slavish and foreboding fears harassing the soul under different trials; if it were, there would not be any need for the “fear nots” in God’s word. Many more things on the negative side might be advanced, but let these suffice.

What this liberty or freedom is. It is then a freedom from the curse of the law, by Christ having been made a curse for us; and a freedom from the legal precept, by Christ obeying every precept in our stead and for us. And as Jeremiah says, “He is the Lord our righteousness.” (Jer. xxiii. 6.) And as Paul says, “He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.” (Gal. iii. 13.) And, “He who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” (2 Cor. v. 21.) And again: “Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” (1 Cor. i. 30.)

Now, when these things are brought home to the soul by the Holy Ghost, the same Spirit gives power to the appropriating hand of faith to receive them, and the soul has peace in believing; for “with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.” The believer now can say, Abba, Father; having received the spirit of adoption, he has the spirit of power, of love, and a sound mind. The Son hath made him free, and he is free, not in word only, but in deed and

in truth. He is free from condemnation. He walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. He is no more a servant, but a son. He has freedom of access to the Father through the Son by the Spirit. He is freely, and fully, and finally delivered from hell, and having the Spirit's testimony of it, can say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." He is now dead to sin by the body of Christ, that he should be married to Christ, and bring forth fruit unto God. He serves the Lord not in "the oldness of the letter, but in newness of spirit." (Rom. vii. 5., 6.) "The life he now lives in the flesh is by faith of the Son of God, who loved him, and gave himself for him." (Gal. ii. 20.) God's faithfulness and truth are the girdle of his loins. His promise is, "As thy day thy strength shall be." He depends more on the faithfulness of God to fulfil his promises, than on his own faithfulness; looks more to what Christ has done *for* him than what he has done *in* him;* and he hangs more on the Lord that gives comfort, than on the comfort, and acknowledges the Giver in the gift. Nor does this have any tendency to make him careless. Though he is not afraid of being sent to hell, yet he fears his Father's rod, for the fear of God is in his heart, and the rejoicing of the saints is full of the fear of God, and a filial regard for his precepts. And he hates every false way, but loves God's way of salvation in his dear Son; and rejoices that the covenant made with him (Christ) is ordered in all things and sure, because the Holy Ghost has shown him his interest in it. And sure I am there is no real gospel liberty short of this made manifest to the soul.

But this makes no alteration in poor fallen nature. She is rebellious still, and the most awful things are brought to light from this filthy fountain, which will fill the poor soul with distress, and make him say, "Can God, in very deed, dwell here?" The devil will tempt him to the most awful presumption; but the poor soul will cry, "Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins;" cleanse thou me from secret faults; and the world will hate him with a double hatred, both professor and profane. This is the path I have travelled in for many years.

If you think these few remarks are worthy a place in your Magazine, you are at liberty to publish them.

W. T.

* It is true, that the believer in his right mind looks more to Christ for deliverance from the curse of the law, for justification and acceptance with God, than to what Christ has done *in* him. But in seasons of darkness and desertion, guilt and bondage, and great doubts and fears respecting the possession of grace in the heart, he then turns and looks within, to see if he possesses any real marks of grace, any tokens of divine life in the soul; for it is only as he has hope, and he is enabled to believe he possesses these things, that he hopes and believes he has an interest in Christ and his finished work. If he has no hope or evidence of Christ having done something *in* him, he cannot rely upon, nor feelingly believe what Christ has done *for* him. And again: many who have enjoyed gospel liberty and peace, through the power of sin, temptation, and unbelief, have fallen into deep distress of soul, have sunk in despondency and utter helplessness, and been again entangled with the yoke of bondage (Gal. v. 1.) to a degree which our correspondent does not seem to intimate.—Eds.]

CHRIST IN THE SOUL, THE HOPE OF GLORY.

Dear Friend,—May the God of all comfort and peace be with you.

I have felt for some time a desire in my mind to drop you a line, but one thing or other has prevented it. I am still hobbling on in the old beaten path of tribulation, many times very faint, but still pursuing, with a hope that the good Lord that has blessed me on my way thus far will help me to the end. Bless his dear name! he is very pitiful, and his tender mercies are very great towards me, a poor unworthy worm, that is not worth the notice of either God or man. My soul stands astonished at his goodness and mercy that have followed me so many years in this dreary desert, delivered me out of so many pits, gins, and snares, supplied every need, been my shelter in so many dreadful storms, and made a way through every mountain that my soul has many times feared would have fallen upon me and sunk me to rise no more. My soul can say, "Ebenezer: Litherto the Lord hath helped me." He has, my dear brother and friend; and can I help loving him, and speaking well of him? I cannot; he is the Chief of ten thousand, he is altogether lovely. He is my God, my Glory, and the Lifter up of my head.

I had a deal of furnace work to go through last winter; and you know where there is a deal of furnace work there is a deal of dross and tin. Nay, sometimes I feared there was nothing else in my soul but dross, and that I should be proved at last nothing but reprobate silver; for it appeared to me that all was burned up and consumed but cries and groans to God for help and deliverance. These the fire could not consume; for the hotter it burned the louder my soul cried, nor could all the threatenings of the devil stop my mouth from crying to the Lord. The old enemy laboured hard to persuade me that it was of no use for me to cry to God, for he would never hear me nor show me one more token for good. I told him that I must cry, I could not but cry, for my soul was out of the reach of either men or angels, and my help must come from the Lord which made heaven and earth; and if he shuts out my cry and sinks me never to rise more, I richly deserve it. He cannot do wrong. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" He shall, whether he damns or saves, wounds or heals, frowns or smiles. My very soul cried out feelingly from my heart, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause and execute judgment for me; he will bring me forth to the light and I shall behold his righteousness." And here my soul lay passive in his hands to do with me and for me as his sovereign will and pleasure pleased; and I could say plainly without stammering, "Not my will, but thine be done." And O what a calmness and quietness I felt in my soul! Such a sweet casting of all my burden upon the Lord, and such sweetness and power in feeling his everlasting arms underneath sustaining me, that my soul could not help boldly saying, "The eternal God is

my refuge, and underneath are his everlasting arms, and he shall thrust out the enemy from before me, and shall say, Destroy them."

I then found a little of the blessedness that Israel then dwells in safety alone. "The fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew." And O the blessed healing virtues of the heavenly dew upon my poor soul! I do think it would have done your soul good had you seen the effect it had upon the poor old worm that had given all up, when he came out of his hole like a giant refreshed with wine, and made a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth, and threshed the mountains and beat them small, and the hills flew like chaff. "Yea, thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them, and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel." And my soul did glory in the Lord. It did, my friend; for the glory of the Lord shone into my soul, and it was so illuminated with his grandeur, majesty, and glory, that I could not help bursting out with a song of praise and triumph, "Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel, my Father, for ever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; the kingdom is thine, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might, and in thine hand it is to make great and to give strength unto all; therefore, my God, I thank thee, and praise thy glorious name." His still small voice broke my heart when he whispered in my soul, "I will glorify the house of my glory." My soul bowed before him, and exclaimed, "I will praise thee with the psaltery, even thy truth, O my God; unto thee will I sing with the harp, O thou Holy One of Israel. My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee, and my soul which thou hast redeemed. My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long, for they are confounded, for they are brought unto shame that seek my hurt."

When my soul is here, I want no one to tell me it is my duty to trust my all into the hands of a covenant God, for if I had ten thousand bodies and souls I could leave them all in his blessed hands. I need no one to tell me when my soul is here that I ought to love God, honour God, obey God, and live up to my privileges as a child of God. O how sweetly and easily this is done when the privilege of God's fatherly smiles shines in my soul and owns me as his child, and calls me his dove, and says that I am all fair, there is no spot in me. How can I help loving him, obeying him, honouring him? I need no one to tell me, when my soul is here, to thank him for the many mercies that I am daily receiving at his hand. When these mercies shine in my soul, they flow from my heart with sweetness, freedom, and pleasure, so that it is my meat and drink to thank him, to bless him, to praise him, and to adore him for the multitude of his tender mercies that have followed me all the days of my poor worthless life. I need no one

to tell me to pack up all my doubts and fears, and send them off by the railway, for they are all gone without my packing either by railway or devilway, and I never inquire which way they went; for when my soul is here I am so much taken up with the glories of my God and Saviour that I have no thought about doubts and fears. When the peace of God is enjoyed in my heart, who can give trouble? I need no one to tell me to be careful to maintain good works, and that it is my duty to set an example to the flock, whom God has set over the flock as under shepherd, for the precious grace of God teaches me to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly and godly in this present evil world.

Obedience to my God and Saviour is then my meat and drink, my pleasure and my joy. My soul is indeed afraid of offending him ten thousand times more than of going to hell. O it is sweet work when God shines into my heart and gives me the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ! It furnishes me with such a sweet song of praise that neither sin, death, nor hell, men, nor devils, can stop either my heart or tongue from singing aloud, "The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an host should encamp against me, yet my heart shall not fear, for the Lord is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever." And the dear Lord is not displeased with my song, and I have not one moment's uneasiness about the displeasure of men and devils. My greatest concern is the pleasure of my God enjoyed in my soul, who hath said, not only in his word but in my heart, "Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit; let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountain, let them give glory unto the Lord, and declare his praise in the islands."

How blessed, how good, how precious to find the words of God and eat them! It is indeed joy and gladness to the soul. God says, "In that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee; though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation."

O the joy, to draw water out of the wells of salvation! No bonds, no guilt, no slavish fears here. It is living waters of eternal life, the river of God's pleasure; yea, and I can say my very soul's pleasure, too. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early."

But methinks my friend is ready to say, "Surely this is not the poor old man that has told such dismal tales about being robbed, and spoiled, and immured in such stinking, filthy holes, and prison houses, that was given up for prey, and that none

said, 'Deliver him,,'" It is the very old man, I can assure you. You know our dear Lord saith, "A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come, but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world." O the joy, the delight of feeling Christ in my soul the hope of glory! I can sing from my heart with the poet, and neither feel nor fear any condemnation in my conscience from heaven, earth, or hell.

"My God, my life, my love,
To thee, to thee I call;
I cannot live if thou remove,
For thou art all in all.

"Thy shining grace can cheer
The dungeon where I dwell;
'Tis Paradise when thou art near,
If thou depart, 'tis hell.

"The smilings of thy face,
How amiable they are!
'Tis heaven to rest in thy embrace,
And nowhere else but there.

"Nor earth, nor all the sky,
Can one delight afford;
No, not a drop of real joy,
Without thy presence, Lord!"

"Were I possessor of the earth,
And call'd the stars my own,
Without thy graces and thyself,
I were a wretch undone.

"Let others stretch their arms like seas,
And grasp in all the shore,
Grant me the visits of thy face,
And I desire no more."

That the Lord may bless you, my dear friend, with his dear fatherly smiles, that you may walk in the light of his countenance, and that you may be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, glorifying the Lord in body, soul, and spirit, is the prayer of the chief of sinners saved by grace.

My love to Mr. K. and all friends.

Trowbridge, October 5th, 1847.

J. W.

HE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH.

I.

Dear Friend,—I once more feel a desire to write you a few lines; I say once more, for a few weeks ago I felt a strong inclination to do so, when, I would hope, I felt my heart warmed and refreshed with the cheering beams of the Sun of Righteousness. But it is not now so with me. I feel his comforting presence sensibly withdrawn. O that he would give me precious faith to trust in, though I cannot see him! The cloud is upon the tabernacle. O for patience to wait till it shall please him once more to take up the

cloud, that I may behold the light "of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man;" for I would still hope (if Satan and my own vile heart do not deceive me) that I have felt some little of his presence. For who but His dear self can move and melt down the unfeeling heart of man? who but He can break in sunder the iron bars of unbelief, and bid the brazen gates of guilt remove, with tokens of his bleeding, dying love?

"O! that such a worm as I,
Should ever feel his presence nigh;
Should ever live to know and feel,
The melting of a heart like steel!"

O how sweet it is to be favoured with the least nearness of access to him, to spend if but a few moments in the inner courts of his presence in communion with him! What are ten thousand days spent in the outer courts of formal worship compared with this? Without the quickening and refreshing operations of the Holy Spirit, all is dryness and barrenness, darkness, wretchedness, misery, and death. Not one spiritual sigh or groan can go forth; not one genuine tear of contrition can flow; not one sincere feeling of self-loathing and self-abasement can be experienced; no real panting and longing; no hungering and thirsting after Jesus, the Bread and Water of Life; no heart to thank him, no breath to pray or praise him for all his special mercies, not only internal but external. O the base ingratitude of my sinful heart! When I look back on the year which is now closing, and view his delivering, upholding, and preserving hand, when to all human appearance sudden death might have been the consequence; and yet to be so hard and unfeeling! O! without his special grace these things must prove my eternal ruin! O that I may not be left to the awful delusions of Satan, and my own proud and deceitful heart; nor to cleave to any false hopes and sandy foundations; but to have a real, experimental, and unctuous knowledge of Jesus by the teachings of the Holy Ghost, a well-grounded hope in the blood and righteousness of Christ, a real and heartfelt experience of the depths of my vile heart, to lay my hand upon my mouth and walk softly all my days (not feignedly, but sincerely) because of my sin; and to go as a poor, empty, needy creature, without understanding and without strength, to Him who has said, "Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom; I have understanding; I am strength."

O may it not be found pride or presumption with Him who knows the secret workings of my abominable heart, that I attempt to write a few words at this time; for I can assure you at one time I could not have thought I had such evils in my heart! O what pride and self-seeking lurk within! How often it rears its hateful head, even in conversation with a fellow-worm, perhaps unnoticed and unsuspected by him! O how my vile heart at times wanted to be thought something of! And yet at times I hope I can say,

"Though I feel it rise within,
I feel I hate it too."

But O how seldom do I feel as I would on account of these things! Sometimes I fear I have not felt that deep contrition for sin, and that brokenness of spirit which the Lord's children experience, and make manifest by their life and conversation.

I hope, if the Lord's will, you are enjoying his soul-supporting and soul-comforting presence; and though your poor frail tabernacle may still remain tottering, your soul may be prospering and in health. But O! if I know any of these things, I am sure we need continual humbling, purging, and breaking down; and the Lord knows where to lay his rod, and when too. Without it what cleaving to the poor perishing things of this life, what anxiety and care after it, what grovelling and earth-bound hearts we have, when, alas! all that the world can do is to cause deadness to the Lord and spiritual things! "To be carnally minded is death," and such I often feel.

As to my bodily infirmities, at times I feel a pressing weight upon me, sometimes great bodily pain—indeed few days but I feel pain more or less. It is a great trial; I feel it so more and more. It is three months since the Lord in his wisdom laid me aside from outwardly attending to my business, and how much longer it is to be he only knows. I trust he does at times enable me to beg for patience and resignation to his will, when, on the other hand, I seem ready to nurse despair.

I feel great lowness and depression of spirits with being so much confined in doors, but hope, as the spring advances, my health will improve, if the Lord's will: I once thought I should not get out any more. I thought much about you at that time. Perhaps

"A few more days, a few more years,
In this dark desert to complain,
A few more sighs, a few more tears,
Before we bid adieu to pain."

I remain most sincerely yours,

Oakham, December 31st, 1836.

THOS. COPELAND.

[The above letter, the first of a series which we hope to insert, was written by the young man whose "Poetry" we have sometimes inserted, signed "T. C., Oakham." It is nearly nine years since he left this vale of tears, but his memory still leaves a sweet savour in the hearts of those who knew and loved him.—EDS.]

EDITORS' REVIEW.

A Protest Against the Doctrines, "That a Child of God cannot Backslide; That the Lord does not Chastise his Children for Sin; That Sin in the Thought of the Heart is as Offensive to God as Sin in the Outward Action." By John Kershaw.—Groombridge, London.

* (Continued from page 160.)

We promised in our last Number to enter more fully into the doctrine that a believer cannot backslide; and we shall, therefore, now attempt to show how unscriptural such an opinion is.

But it will first be desirable to state fairly and impartially what some of its leading advocates understand by the statement that a believer cannot backslide.

1. They do not deny that a child of God can and does depart from the Lord.

2. They do not deny that these departures are sins. But,

3. They say that the Old Testament word "backslide" is not applicable to the departures and sins of believers under the New Testament. For

4. They assert that the word "backslide" in the Old Testament always means to apostatize fully and finally from God; and therefore, as the elect of God cannot do this, that it is a wrong word to employ of the slips and falls of believers.

We believe that this is a fair and impartial statement, and what we may perhaps call the modern and modified views of those who hold that a believer cannot backslide.

It will, doubtless, be perceived by those who are at all acquainted with the subject, that this is a shifting from the ground taken up by the original propagators of the error; and it might appear, at first sight, that by so doing the whole is now reduced to a mere verbal question. If this were really the case, we should not deem it worth while to waste many words upon it. But we are not so ignorant of the many turnings and windings of error as to be thus deceived. The ways of error, like those of the harlot, are "moveable that thou canst not know them." (Prov. v. 6.) "She is loud and stubborn;"—what a picture of error! "her feet abide not in her house;"—always shifting her ground. "Now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner,"—with a modest veil upon her face, like Tamar, (Gen. xxxviii. 14,) to catch the unwary. (Prov. vii. 11. 12.) No; let us not be so deceived. The ground may be shifted without the error being renounced. There may be the old picture in a new frame. One coat may be kept for in-doors, and another for out-of-doors, but the same man in both.

Let it, however, be borne in mind, that in bending our bow against the non-backsliding doctrine, we are aiming at *principles*, and not at *persons*. It is not because a church here or a church there, a minister at one chapel or a minister at another chapel, holds these views, that we attack them; but because it is an error widely spread, and the *spirit* of it often held where the *letter* is not mentioned. As Bunyan says on a similar subject, "There are many of this man's mind, who have not this man's mouth;" and so many a one may secretly encourage himself in sin by believing that a child of God cannot backslide, who would not make such an open avowal.

In attempting to overthrow these views, we shall, as the Lord may enable, draw our arguments from four distinct sources,

constituting so many distinct grounds of objection to the non-backsliding doctrine.

- I. *The literal meaning of the word.*
- II. *The analogy of faith.*
- III. *The tendency of the doctrine.*
- IV. *The experience of the saints.*

I. In our view, the first thing to be settled is *the literal meaning of the word*. To settle this it will not be sufficient to confine ourselves to the word as it occurs in the English Bible. Too great praise cannot be given to; and, generally speaking, too much reliance cannot be placed upon our authorised English version. But it must be borne in mind that it is, after all, but a translation by fallible men; and that, therefore, if we can go to the original it will be very desirable to do so, especially, (as in this case,) where the question turns so much upon the meaning of a word.

We must freely acknowledge, that in making this appeal to the original, two considerations have so pressed on our mind as almost to arrest our pen. 1. Lest we should appear in any way to be making an empty parade of the little knowledge which we may happen to possess upon the subject; and 2. lest we be thereby getting upon ground where comparatively few, perhaps, of our readers can follow us. But these considerations have been overborne by our inward conviction, 1. that by making no allusion whatever to the original we should sacrifice a powerful argument in our favour; and 2. that the question cannot be fully and fairly settled without making an appeal to the very exact words which God himself saw fit originally to employ.

Now, would not most of our readers naturally suppose, 1. that wherever the word "backslide" occurs in our version, it would be *one and the same word* in the Hebrew? and 2., that the original word or words, translated "backslide," meant to *slip or slide backwards*?

We shall, therefore, probably surprise them when we assure them that neither of these suppositions would be correct; but that, 1. there are *three distinct Hebrew words* rendered in the authorised version "backslide;" and 2., that in none of these three words is there anything like *slipping or sliding, backwards or forwards*, expressed or implied.

These three Hebrew words we may write in English characters thus:—1. *shoob*; 2. *soog*; and 3. *sarar*.

1. The word *shoob*, or rather, one of its derivatives, (which in Hebrew is nearly the same thing,) occurs, and is translated "backslide," Jer. iii. 6, 8, 11, 12, 14, 22; and also Jer. ii. 19; v. 6; viii. 5;

xiv. 7; xxxi. 22. In fact, wherever the word "backslide" occurs in Jeremiah, it is in the original a derivative from the root *shoob*. And what does *shoob* mean? Anything like slipping or sliding? No: it means literally, 1. *to turn*, or *return*, and 2. *to turn aside*, or *turn back*. Thus all the expressions in the prophet Jeremiah, as well as Hosea xi. 7., xiv. 4., where "backsliding" is spoken of, mean literally a turning aside—a turning away—a turning back from God. In fact, our translators have so rendered the word, Prov. i. 23. "For the *turning away* of the simple shall slay them;" the original word, translated "*turning away*," being precisely the same as that rendered "*backsliding*" in the passages quoted from Jeremiah and Hosea.*

2. In Prov. xiv. 14, ("The backslider in heart† shall be filled with his own ways,") another word is used, *soog*. In this word also there is nothing like slipping or sliding implied. It means literally *to go away from*, *to depart*, and is translated *go back*, Psalm lxxx. 18; liii. 3; *turned back*, Psalm xliv. 18; xxxv. 4; Jer. xlvi. 5; Zeph. i. 6, &c.

3. The third word translated *backslide* is *sarar*, which occurs Hosea iv. 16: "For Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer."‡ In this word, too, there is nothing like sliding or slipping contained. It means literally to be *refractory*, *stubborn*; and is translated *stubborn*, Deut. xxi. 18, 20; Psa. lxxviii. 8; Prov. vii. 11: *revolting*, Jer. v. 23; Hos. ix. 15: *rebellious*, Isaiah i. 23, xxx. 1, lxxv. 2; Psalm lxxviii. 18. It also occurs Zech. vii. 11: "And pulled away the shoulder;" in the margin, "gave a *backsliding* shoulder," literally, "a stubborn, or refractory shoulder"—the idea being taken from a stubborn, obstinate animal, that will not submit to the yoke.

Thus, from a comparison of the original, we may safely assert that the three Hebrew words translated "backslide," possess two distinct meanings; (the two first, namely, *shoob* and *soog*, being

* It is not, perhaps, generally known that the word "backslide" is not found in any English translation of the Bible prior to that executed in the reign of James I., A.D. 1611, and commonly called the Authorised Version. The Geneva Bible, A. D. 1560, which is considered of high authority, never uses the word backsliding at all, but renders the Hebrew words by "*rebellious*," "*disobedient*," &c. Thus we read, "Hast thou seen what this *rebel* Israel hath done?" (Jer. iii. 6;) "*rebellious* Israel," (verses 8, 11;) "O ye *disobedient* children, turn again," (v. 14;) "O ye *disobedient* children, return, and I will heal your *rebellions*," (v. 22;) "Thy *turnings back* shall reprove thee," (Jer. ii. 19;) "Their *rebellions* are increased," (Jer. v. 6.) Can a child of God be "*rebellious*," "*disobedient*," and "*turn back*" from God? If he may, and the authority of the Geneva version be admitted, the question is settled at once.

† Thus translated in the Geneva Bible: "The heart that *declineth* shall be satiate with his own ways."

‡ Thus rendered in the Geneva Bible: "For Israel is *rebellious* as an *unruly* heifer."

of nearly the same signification;) and, therefore, that wherever the word "backslide" occurs in our English Bible, we may understand that it means either—1. to *turn away*, to *turn aside*, i.e. from God; or 2. to be *stubborn*, *refractory*, and *rebellious*. Now, who can or dare say that a child of God does not *turn away* and *turn aside* from God, or is not *refractory* and *rebellious*? Did not David turn aside from God in his awful fall? What says the blessed Spirit? "Because David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and *turned not aside* from anything that he commanded him, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite." (1 Kings xv. 5.) And if he turned aside, he backslided. "I have gone astray," he confesses, "like a lost sheep." (Psalm cxix. 176.) Did not Solomon also turn aside? as we read, "His wives *turned away* his heart." (1 Kings xi. 3.) Or was not Job *stubborn*, when he would not let his righteousness go? Jonah *refractory*, when he went down to Joppa? And Jeremiah *rebellious*, when he cursed the day of his birth?

II. But we leave the mere verbal question, and proceed to *the analogy of faith*. Here we consider the main strength of the controversy to lie.

But in order to clear our ground, we must, at the very outset, explain what we mean by "*the analogy of faith*." It is a scriptural expression. "Having, then, gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy *according to the proportion (literally, analogy) of faith*." (Rom. xii. 6.) That is, there is a certain harmony, proportion, or analogy between the different portions of God's revealed truth, which must be known to and observed by all who would preach or write according to the mind of the Holy Ghost.

This analogy of faith is, of course, very wide—being indeed co-extensive with the whole of revealed truth; but by the analogy of faith in the present instance, we mean the proportion or harmony of the two covenants—the Old and the New, the dispensation of Mount Sinai and the dispensation of Mount Zion. And in arguing from this analogy, we must lay down two points as the foundation of our argument. 1. That the Old Testament church was typical of the New Testament church; and that, therefore, 2. the terms applicable to the former are by analogy applicable to the latter.

The stronghold of the advocates of the non-backsliding doctrine is this—that the persons called "backsliders" in the Old Testament were not regenerate characters, and therefore that the word "backsliding" is inapplicable to believers under the New Testament.

To which we answer, It does not matter whether they were regenerate or not. The question does not turn upon that point. This is the point on which the whole question turns. Were they the outwardly recognised people of God? Were they "Israelites,

to whom pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises?" (Rom. ix. 4.) Were they members of God's outward and visible church? Regeneration or non-regeneration affected the salvation of *individuals* among them, but it did not affect the covenant relationship of the people *as a whole*. Did regeneration give them a right to circumcision, to sacrifice, to keeping the passover? In a word, did regeneration make the nation of Israel God's outward people, or were they made so by the ancient covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Or again, did God cast them off as a people because they were not regenerate, or because they worshipped idols? Which covenant did the children of Israel break—the old, or the new? What are God's own words? "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord." (Jer. xxxi. 31, 32.) Regeneration belongs to the new covenant; circumcision to the old. To introduce, therefore, regeneration into this subject is to confound the two covenants, and to misunderstand the whole position of the children of Israel. One consideration, we think, will settle the question. Did God ever address the heathen nations as "backsliders?" Did he ever say to the Moabites and Ammonites, or to the seven accursed nations of Canaan, "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings?" No; it was to the children of Israel alone, as being his people in a covenant relationship, that he spoke when he called them "backsliding children."

In this, then, lies the suitability and propriety of the word "backsliding," as commonly applied to the slips and falls of God's regenerated people—that what the children of Israel were *typically* and *outwardly*, God's spiritual family are *anti-typically* and *inwardly*; and therefore the terms applicable to the former are applicable to the latter.

The advocates of the non-backsliding doctrine confound two entirely distinct things—identity and analogy. It is not because the sins of the children of Israel are *the same* with the slips and falls of believers now, but because they are *analogous*, that the word "backslide" is applied to both. A sin may be *similar* without being *the same*, may be *analogous* without being *identical*. And it is this analogy or similarity between the two covenants, and between the people under them, which is the foundation of the transference of Old Testament terms to the New, and among them of the word "backslide." In the same manner, the Old Testament term *circumcision* is used in a New Testament sense, (Col. ii. 11.) not from identity of meaning, but from analogy—

the circumcision of the heart being not the same with, but similar to, or rather analogous with, the circumcision of the flesh.

In the same manner, when John says, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols," (1 John v. 21,) he borrows an Old Testament word, and uses it in a New Testament sense. He does not mean by "idols" literal statues of wood and stone, as the Old Testament prophets intended by the word, but inward objects of carnal and sensual worship; in other words, idols by *analogy*, not idols by *identity*—worshipped not in the *same* way, by the bended knee; but in a *similar* way, by the carnal heart. So when we say that a believer "backslides," we do not mean that he does *literally* what Israel did of old—sets up golden calves at Dan and Bethel, offers his children to Moloch, worships the Queen of Heaven, bows down to Baal; but that he departs *spiritually* from the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, his covenant God, as the children of Israel departed *literally* by these outward acts of idolatrous worship from the God of Israel. It was this departing from God after they had been brought nigh by covenant, by circumcision, by sacrifices, which made them *backsliders*.

The heathen of old were not "backsliders," for they did not turn aside from a covenant God; nor are unregenerate men "backsliders" now, for they do not turn aside from a covenant God. That the children of Israel backslided never to return, and were cast off for their transgressions, and that the children of God backslide, and are mercifully restored, has nothing whatever to do with the propriety of the word. We do not contend for the identity of the sin—that were indeed most absurd—but for the analogy of it. That turns solely upon this point, that literal Israel was a type and figure of spiritual Israel, and therefore that words applicable to the former are applicable to the latter.

If we give up this, we may as well strike out half the Bible, for we nullify thereby the typical nature of all the sacrifices, limit the prophecies, by restricting them wholly to the literal Israel, and do away with the promises of the Old Testament as applicable to the saints under the New. In order, therefore, to be fully consistent with himself, a minister who holds what we for shortness call the non-backsliding doctrine, should never preach out of the Old Testament at all, and might as well tear it out of the Bible, or sew it up with packthread.

Does God in the Old Testament speak to his people as a Father, a Shepherd, a Husband, a promise-making, a promise-keeping God? It is not to them as *regenerate* that he thus speaks, but as *covenant* with them. But if these covenant promises are not applicable to the people of God now, the Old Testament is a sealed book to the Lord's family. For instance, that sweet promise, "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings," derives all its sweetness from this, that it is the invitation and promise of a covenant God; and that it is so, is evident from the reply, "Behold, we come unto thee, *for thou art the Lord our God.*"

But why is it applicable to believers now? Because it was originally spoken to those who stood in covenant relationship to God then, and is therefore applicable to those who stand in covenant relationship now. Could a heathen say this? No; but why not? Because he was unregenerate? No; but because he stood in no covenant relationship to the God of Israel, and therefore Jehovah was not the Lord his God. But might one of the children of Israel say it,—any one, whether regenerate or not? Yes, if he cast away his idols. If he were regenerate, he could say it with greater emphasis, with more heart-felt contrition, for he could then say it in the spirit, as a new-covenant worshipper; but the foundation of the return, as well as the foundation of the invitation, lay in this, that God was outwardly Israel's covenant God.

So again, "Turn, O backsliding children, for I am married unto you." Could or did God address these words to the heathen, idolatrous nations? No; for he was not "married" to them. It is true that it was an outward, typical marriage only; and therefore God gave Israel "a bill of divorce and put her away;" (Jer. iii. 8;) but the marriage was the foundation of the invitation. And thus we argue, As the terms marriage and covenant, and the promises of the Old Testament are applicable to the New because the former were types of the latter, so the word *backslide*, which was limited to the outward departures of the literal and typical Israel, is applicable to the slips and falls of spiritual Israel. All admit that the word backsliding is a term borrowed from the Old Testament—the old dispensation. The whole question turns on the propriety or non-propriety of the word as applicable now. Shall the word be wholly discarded as not a New Testament word, or shall it be employed? If employed, in what sense shall it be used? Is it or is it not rightly employed, in a New Testament sense, to signify the slips and falls of God's covenant people? We assert that according to the analogy of faith it is.

Now, how could an advocate of the non-backsliding doctrine handle such a text as, "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings?" We presume that it would not be all historical and doctrinal, but that we should have something experimental at the end. Well, whom, in a New Testament sense, would he make the "backsliding children" to be? Are they regenerate or unregenerate, elect or reprobate? If, according to the non-backsliding doctrine, they are unregenerate, why are they called "*children*?" Does the Holy Ghost in the New Testament call the unregenerate, or the reprobate, "*children*?" We read, "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." (Rom. viii. 17.) "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." (Heb. ii. 13.) Again, what will he do with the word "*return*?" Can an unregenerate man, or a reprobate, *return* to God? To return, is to come to God a second time. When was the first time that the unregenerate or the reprobate man came

spiritually to God? What will he do with the words, "I will heal your backslidings?" Does God heal the sins of the unregenerate and the reprobate? How will he treat the *invitation* itself? Will he follow out the non-backsliding views, and invite the unregenerate and the reprobate? And how will he handle the *promise*? Will he bow *that* upon the unregenerate and reprobate too? O what a mangle-mangle! what a confusion of tongues, worse than Babel ever saw, or the assembly at Ephesus (Acts xix. 32) witnessed!

And what a robbing and plundering is this of the souls of God's living family! What a taking of the children's bread and casting it to dogs! And we might almost add, what a fighting against the Holy Ghost! For has not that blessed Comforter applied with power to thousands of God's poor, tried, and desponding family the promise, "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings?" To deny, then, that such words are addressed to God's regenerate children—what is this but to deny that the Holy Ghost ever revealed such a promise for their encouragement in the word, or ever applied it with a divine power to their hearts?

Thus *the analogy of faith* grinds the non-backsliding views to powder; for they and the truth as it is in Jesus can no more unite, either in doctrine, experience, or practice, than the clay and the iron in the image seen by Daniel, (ii. 43;) and to be consistent, a man must do one of three things: renounce the doctrine of non-backsliding—renounce the doctrines of grace—or, what perhaps will be less reluctantly given up, renounce handling Old Testament promises and invitations in a gospel, experimental manner.

An Arminian may hold the non-backsliding doctrine, for he can hold anything; but, letting alone all experience, a sound, honest Calvinist cannot do so consistently even with his doctrinal creed.

But the advocates of the non-backsliding doctrine say that the word "backslide" is applied in the Old Testament to the children of Israel, the ten tribes who were carried into captivity by Tiglath-pileser, (2 Kings xv. 29,) Shalmaneser, (2 Kings xviii. 9—12,) and Esarhaddon, (Ezra. iv. 2,) kings of Assyria, and never returned. "It is, therefore," they say, "quite inapplicable to a believer under the New Testament, who never departs from God so as not to return; but if applicable at all in a New Testament sense, is applicable only to apostates." If this be so, surely we may consider the terms "backslide" and "apostatize" convertible. Let us try how they read when interchanged, for that is the true test of terms being convertible, that is, may be used for one another. "Return, ye apostates, and I will heal your apostacies." "Turn, O apostates, for I am married unto you." Thus, if this doctrine be true, that backsliding means full and final apostacy, we are reduced to this dilemma—either that the invitations and promises of the Old Testament are inapplicable to believers now—in which case, the best thing would be to seal up all the pages of Jeremiah and Hosea, (for of course if the promises are inapplicable, so are the

threatenings and warnings,)—or else that apostates may return and be healed of their apostacies. How far this doctrine agrees with Heb. vi. x., and 1 John v. 16., must be left to the non-backsliders to determine.

III. But though to our mind these arguments against the non-backsliding doctrine seem fully decisive, the strongest objection remains to be considered. We call it the strongest because most generally appreciable, as well as on account of its practical consequences. This we do not hesitate to say is, *its pernicious tendency*.

As by their fruits men are to be known, so by their fruits are doctrines to be known. The religion of Jesus Christ is a holy, self-denying religion—a doctrine according to godliness. Whatever, therefore, leads to opposite principles and to opposite practice is not the religion of Jesus Christ, and is to be shunned and abhorred by his believing people. How strong upon this point is the language of the Holy Ghost: "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself." (1 Tim. vi. 3—5.)

Now, we do not say that the advocates of the non-backsliding doctrine are men of loose principles and of licentious conduct. That were recklessly to libel a body of men of whom we know little or nothing. But we say that their doctrine is such; and if the men are godly, self-denying characters, it is in spite of their doctrine, and not in consequence of it.

In order to observe the tendency of a doctrine, we must look at it, not as it *may* be understood by the few, but as it *is* actually understood by the many. Arsenic and prussic acid must not be left in the way of children, though they may stand, when properly labelled, on the shelves of an apothecary's shop.

As far as some of the leading advocates of the non-backsliding doctrine are concerned, it may now have become a mere speculative theory, or verbal controversy. But what do most of their followers—the quibblers, for instance, about the slipping and sliding of the old man and the new—understand by the doctrine that a believer cannot backslide? Will they not naturally understand the word "backslide" in its most obvious sense—in the sense used by good men for generations? and will they not conclude thereby, either that a child of God cannot fall—which is the worst kind of presumption; or that his falls are not sins—which is the worst kind of Antinomianism? We will put this to a very simple test. Let a new minister go into a strange pulpit, and drop this one sentence: "I say that a child of God cannot backslide," what meaning would nine-tenths of his hearers attach to the words but this—that

the slips and falls of a child of God are not sins? And what is the obvious tendency of such a doctrine, but to do away with the exceeding heinousness of sin, to harden the conscience, and to plunge poor misguided wretches into everything that is vile?

Allowing that the advocates of the non-backsliding doctrine do not mean this, and would shrink from such conclusions, are they honest, are they tender over the people's welfare, or zealous for the honour and glory of God, still to persevere in holding a doctrine liable to be so awfully perverted? If a man leave a light near a barrel of gunpowder, he is justly held responsible for the explosion. He may say, "I did not mean to fire the gunpowder," or, "I did not think there was any danger." Very likely; but you *ought* to have been careful, and should not have risked such a terrible catastrophe. And is a man less culpable who, knowing the inflammable nature of sin, brings it and a spark together? No; whatever be his intention, we must still call him an incendiary.

Let us see, then, what is the natural tendency of the non-backsliding doctrine. No man can have watched the workings of his own heart, or become at all acquainted with its innate craft, deceitfulness, and wickedness, without seeing how it catches at every excuse to diminish and slur over the evil of sin. Nor again, can any one possessed of godly fear have failed to notice how soon, how easily, how imperceptibly the conscience gets callous through self-indulgence, and as the Apostle says, "becomes hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." (Heb. iii. 13.) Who too has seen anything of churches and professors without witnessing again and again the pernicious tendency of false doctrine? How many, who once seemed humble, tender, spiritually-minded, and who adorned their profession by their life, are now, entirely through the baneful influence of false doctrine, mere wrecks of what they once were—quarrelsome, disputatious, contentious, proud, buried in the world, if not worse.

Now see the natural effects of the non-backsliding doctrine—observe how it works in hardening the conscience and smoothing over the evil of sin. "A child of God cannot backslide. Therefore my slips and falls—my quiet drop of liquor, my wanton looks and thoughts, my driving a hard bargain, my neglect of prayer and reading the word, my worldly-mindedness and carnality, my lightness and frivolity, my bursts of temper, my compliance with worldly customs and fashions, my running into debt—in a word, all that inconsistency which conscience sometimes flogs me for, cannot be called backsliding. The old man, you know, cannot go forward, and the new man cannot go backward; therefore I cannot backslide. Besides, if I do fall, I fall *forward*,* not backward, just as a

* The word *backslider*, on its first introduction into our language, was written *back-faller*, as is evident from the following quotation: "Onias, with many lyke *backfallers* from God, fled into Egypte."—JOYE, *Exposition of Daniel*.—This old word, *back-falling*, would be fatal to the *forward-falling* theory.

man who stumbles in the street over a stone. Every fall, therefore, as well as every trial, helps me forward."

Thus an advocate of the non-backsliding doctrine may, indeed *must*, consistently argue. This is the *first* step—what we may call the first film over the eye, the first horny coat over the conscience. And now comes step the *second*. The ice bears—let us venture a little further on the pond. To skait about is very pleasant, especially when there is not much danger of being drowned. As a believer cannot back-slide, why need he fear lest he slip-in? "If I cannot backslide, I cannot sin." And if the ice begin to crack under this onward step, why should not the old quibble, a little modified for winter wear, be at hand, as a safety-jacket, to re-assure the timid adventurers? "The old man cannot do anything but sin, therefore we cannot blame *him*; and the new man cannot possibly sin, so we cannot blame *him*. Whom then are we to blame? Why, nobody to be sure."

The advocates of the non-backsliding doctrine may deny that any such conclusion follows from their views. But what we are to consider is the *tendency* of a doctrine. An advocate of infidel principles might argue that infidelity did not imply, much less lead to, immorality. The answer would be, What is its tendency? So we say, Look at the *tendency* of its being continually circulated that a believer cannot backslide. Will not the natural inference be that he cannot sin? And who that knows what man is, can doubt that loose principles as necessarily produce loose conduct as a poisonous tree brings forth poisonous fruit? This is the reason why we are so strenuously opposed to the non-backsliding doctrine. It is a doctrine hateful to our soul, and, we are firmly convinced, opposed to every tender, spiritual, broken, gracious feeling of a believing heart. Were it a mere verbal question we would not meddle with it; but we believe it to be a pernicious error, and one that needs to be exposed as well as opposed.

IV. *The non-backsliding doctrine is contrary to the experience of all the family of God.* Ask any one of God's poor tempted and tried family whether he does not backslide. What would be his answer? "Alas! to my shame and grief I backslide daily, I may say, hourly from the Lord. This is my greatest sorrow and burden. All my trials put together are light compared with this. O! I could weep tears of blood over my heart idolatries, my dreadful backslidings from him whom I love."

Go to such a one when weeping and mourning on his knees over his wretched heart, and tell him that a believer cannot backslide, would he not at once say, "You are either trying to deceive me, or deceiving yourself? *I know*, painfully know, daily and hourly know, that *I* backslide. I am as sure of it as that the sun shines in the sky. It has caused me sighs, groans, and tears without number—made me a burden to myself, and to feel of all men most miserable."

Thus, in whatsoever light we regard the non-backsliding doctrine,

whether the meaning of the original word,—the analogy of faith,—its pernicious tendency,—or its contrariety to the experience of the saints, we see it is to be unhesitatingly condemned.

An apology is necessary on our part at having occupied so much space on such a matter; but we thought it best either to pass over the question in total silence, or examine it at length.

We hope, if the Lord will, in our ensuing Number to consider a little the other points in Mr. Kershaw's "Protest;" which in the meantime, and especially what he has said on the non-backsliding doctrine, we recommend to our readers.

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

The divine Providence which is sufficient to deliver us in our utmost extremity, is equally necessary to our preservation in the most peaceful situation.—*Newton*.

Afflictions scour us of our rust. Adversity, like winter weather, is of use to kill those vermin which the summer of prosperity is apt to produce and nourish.—*Arrowsmith*.

Christ and his cross are two good guests, worth entertaining. Men would fain have Christ by himself, and so have him cheap; but the market will not come down.—*Rutherford*.

"The very hairs of your head are all numbered," says Christ; "fear ye not." On which Austin has this remark: "Thou that canst not lose a single hair, how comes it to pass that thou art afraid of losing thy soul?"

Justification is an act of God's free grace, whereby he clears his people from sin, discharges them from condemnation, and reckons and accounts them righteous, for the sake of Christ's righteousness, which he imputes unto them.—*Gill*.

A million of torches cannot show us the sun. It can only be seen by its own light. Nor can all the natural religion in the world discover what God is, without a divine and supernatural revelation from himself.—*Arrowsmith*.

Against whom doth Satan multiply his malicious assaults? Against those in whom God hath multiplied his graces. Satan is too crafty a pirate to attack an empty vessel. He seeks to rob those vessels only which are richly laden.—*Bp. Couper*.

All the afflictions of God's people are measured by the hand of the most wise, most merciful, and gracious God; all the malice of men and devils cannot add a drachm to the weight, nor a drop to the measure, beyond God's appointment.—*Bunyan*.

If once, like Hezekiah, we call in spectators to see our treasure, and grow proud of our gifts and comforts, then it is high time for God, if he loves us indeed, to send some messengers to carry those away from us which carry our hearts away from him.—*Gurnall*.

The souls of the elect were saved upon trust for four thousand years. The Father gave credit to Christ and glorified his saints on the footing of a sacrifice not yet offered up, and of a righteousness not yet wrought. Christ also, in the days of his flesh, went on credit with his Father every time that he said to a sinner, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," previous to his offering himself on the cross.—*Ryland*.

Regeneration is an irresistible act of God's grace. No more resistance can be made to it than there could be in the first matter to its creation, or in a dead man to his resurrection, or in an infant to its generation. Whatever aversion, contrariety, or opposition there may be to it, in the corrupt nature of man, it is all speedily and easily overcome, by the power of divine grace, when the stony heart is taken away, and a heart of flesh given.—*Gill*.

It is the great design of God in all the troubles he sends upon his people, effectually to teach them the exceeding vanity of the creature, to embitter the things of this world to them, to wean their hearts from them, to bring earthly things out of request with them, to make them see that there is no true contentment nor solid satisfaction for the soul to be found in them, and to make them see where true happiness and contentment are to be had, even in God and in Christ alone, for whom their souls were created, redeemed, and sanctified.—*Bunyan*.

POETRY.

A DESIRE TO DEPART AND TO BE WITH CHRIST, WHICH IS FAR BETTER.

I long to leave this wretched land,
 To join the blest throng,
 In the heart-cheering song,
 The love of my God to his favourite band.
 If I should live to reach the place
 Where seraphs adore him,
 I'll fall down before him,
 And there I'll praise him, and never more cease.
 O, how I long to see the place,
 And joyfully sing,
 Then mount up, and wing
 My way through the realms of unbounded space.
 There Jesus, my Lord, doth reign,
 And high on his throne,
 He shines like the sun;
 And dazzling bright is his angelic train.
 There kindred spirits do dwell;
 And those whom I love
 Join the chorus above,
 To him who has loved us, and saved us from hell.

ZACCHEUS.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”—Matt. v. 6.

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”—2 Tim. i. 9.

“The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.”—Rom. xi. 7.

“If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”—Acts vii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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VOL. XIV.

THE PROMISES AND INVITATIONS OF THE OLD
TESTAMENT.

What is the meaning, the object, and the utility of the promises and invitations contained in the Old Testament?

This question we propose to answer, by the Lord's help, as clearly and as concisely as we can in the following lines.

Not confining ourselves to isolated passages, but reviewing the general drift and bearing of the Old Testament promises and invitations as a connected whole, we may assign to them *three* distinct interpretations:

I. *Temporal.*

II. *Spiritual.*

III. *Prophetical.*

These it will be desirable to consider, both separately, and in their connexion with each other.

I. The first meaning of the Old Testament promises and invitations is *temporal*.

By this we mean that they were strictly adapted to the state and condition of the children of Israel, to whom they were addressed. That state, as regarded the great bulk of the children of Israel, was not a spiritual, a heavenly, an eternal state; but a natural, an earthly, a temporal state. This should be clearly understood, or the greater part of the Old Testament will be unintelligible.

What, then, were the conditions—for there were conditions; what the promises—for there were promises; what the threatenings—for there were threatenings, applicable to the people of Israel under the Old Testament? They were, so far as regarded their national standing, entirely of a temporal nature. That remarkable chapter, Deut. xxviii., sets this in the clearest, strongest light. There Moses, the man of God, sets before assembled Israel the blessing and the curse, and each, it will be remarked, of a strictly temporal nature. Thus runs the blessing: "And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out." (Deut. xxviii. 1—6.)

Are not all these blessings 1. strictly temporal, and 2. dependent upon obedience? These are the two leading characteristics of the covenant made with the children of Israel. A safe, prosperous, and fruitful enjoyment of the land of Canaan—the inheritance promised to their fathers, was made dependent on their obedience to the precepts revealed by Moses. If they disobeyed those commands, if they forsook or rebelled against the Lord, if they worshipped idols—in a word, if they broke the moral or the ceremonial law under which they were placed, the curse immediately fell upon them. And what was its tenor? "But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day, that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee. Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out."* (Deut. xxviii. 15—19.)

Thus the promises and invitations of the Old Testament were, in their primary meaning, strictly *temporal*, and as such addressed to the great body of the nation. And the foundation of these promises was the ancient covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in which the Lord engaged to be their God, and took them to be

* We do not mean to say that there did not lie underneath these temporal curses a far more fearful one—for the curse of a broken law reaches to all eternity as well as to all time; but this was connected with the *spirituality* of the law, ("For we know that the law is spiritual,") and not with it as a *temporal* covenant.

his people. As no other nation ever stood in this federal relation to the Lord, and none succeeded to Israel's place when it was cast off, it is plain that this *temporal* fulfilment of the Old Testament promises has no place now.

One observation on the cause of Israel's being cast off must close this part of our subject. Obedience to the law of Moses was enjoined up to a certain period, when it was to be superseded by the advent of Messiah. "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." (Deut. xviii. 15.)

This Prophet, announced more clearly as the Messiah in subsequent revelations, the children of Israel rejected, and were therefore cast off for disobedience.

II. But there is another—the *spiritual* meaning of the Old Testament promises and invitations, which we will now consider.

The whole nation of Israel was elect outwardly; but only a portion, and that a small portion, was elect inwardly. This will plainly appear from the juxta-position of two passages. "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God *hath chosen thee* to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor *choose* you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people. But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt." (Deut. vii. 6—8.)

The choice here spoken of is evidently national—an election of a people, not of individuals; therefore not to salvation, not unconditional, not irreversible. But there were individuals, such as Samuel, David, Hezekiah, &c., who were chosen to eternal life. Paul therefore says, "What then? Israel (that is, the literal, national Israel) hath not obtained that which he (or it) seeketh for," namely, righteousness; (Rom. ix. 31;) "but the election"—that is, elect individuals out of them (Rom. xi. 1—5) "hath obtained it"—that is, righteousness, "and the rest (of the nation) were blinded." (Rom. xi. 7.)

It was, then, to these elect individuals that the promises and invitations of the Old Testament were *spiritually* addressed. They alone *spiritually* understood them; they alone *spiritually* believed them; and they alone *spiritually* tasted and enjoyed them. How they received them, how they felt the sweetness and power of them, how they were taught, blessed, and sanctified by them, Psalm cxix. is one full exposition: "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." "Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them. The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." "I rejoice at thy

word, as one that findeth great spoil." (Psalm cxix. 103, 105, 120, 130, 162.) Such were the feelings, such the language of the spiritual Israel.

It is this *spiritual* sense which chiefly, we may say solely, belongs to the people of God now. As Gentiles, we have no interest in the *temporal* promises made to the children of Israel; but as regards *spiritual* promises and invitations, whether in the Old Testament or New, to these we may apply the words of the Apostle: "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond, nor free; but Christ is all, and in all." (Coloss. iii. 11.)

The people of God in all time have been taught the same lessons by the same Blessed Spirit: sometimes, indeed, more dimly by type and figure, as the saints of the Old Testament; and sometimes more clearly, as the saints of the New; but as the Teacher has not varied, neither has the instruction. This ever has been, this ever will be, "life eternal: that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John xvii. 3.)

It is, then, this *spiritual*, experimental meaning of the Old Testament promises and invitations which was the food of the people of God under the Old Testament, as it is the food, when applied, of the saints under the New. Take this spiritual interpretation away, and what remains? the dead, dry letter, which never has fed, which never can feed a living soul.

III. But besides the temporal and spiritual, there is a third—the *prophetical* interpretation of the promises and invitations of the Old Testament. This interpretation is future, and will therefore only be fully understood when accomplished.

Thus these three distinct interpretations very much coincide with different periods—the temporal with the past, the spiritual with the present, the prophetical with the future. And it is this adaptation of the word of God to all time—it is this stretching forth of itself, and as it were brooding over the church of God at every period of its existence, which makes the Bible so wonderful a book.

But a few remarks may be desirable by way of explanation of this *prophetical* interpretation.

We believe, then, that besides the *temporal* meaning, which was adapted to the past state of the children of Israel, and the *spiritual* interpretation, which belongs to the people of God now, there is a *prophetical* intention, which remains to be fulfilled in the calling of the Jews.

That God will one day restore Israel, all the prophets unanimously witness. Nor is the language of the New Testament less express. Paul, in Rom. xi., has set forth so plainly the restoration of Israel,

that he who runs may read. He thus sums up the whole argument: "For if thou (O Gentile) wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, (the Gentile stock,) and wert grafted, contrary to nature, into a good olive tree; how much more shall these which be the natural branches (the lineal and natural descendants of Abraham) be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits: that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." (Rom. xi: 24—27.)

Whether this is to be a literal restoration to their own land, as well as a spiritual conversion, or whether an elect remnant shall alone be restored and converted, we shall not attempt to determine. Our own mind, we candidly acknowledge, leans to the view of a general restoration of the people, and a special conversion of the elect remnant only; but good men have differed upon these points; and as it does not affect the broad view of the question, we need not enter upon it. All we wish at present to establish is, that the promises and invitations of the Old Testament have a *prophetical* and at present unfulfilled interpretation.

And now, to bring the whole question to a head, we shall take one instance of an Old Testament promise and invitation, and point out these three distinct interpretations in it, as well as show their mutual connexion.

A more appropriate passage we cannot well find than Jer. iii. 22; and this for two reasons: 1. It contains in the shortest possible compass both an invitation and a promise; and 2. it will perhaps throw light upon, as well borrow light from, our remarks upon the non-backsliding doctrine in our last Number. And, indeed, we are free to confess that we have been led to write this paper as supplemental to, and corroborative of, our remarks there on the analogy of faith.

Let us, then, apply to the passage we have just quoted the three distinct interpretations which we have mentioned, and see how far they are borne out.

"Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings." What is the *literal* meaning of the words—the strictly *temporal* interpretation, as addressed to the children of Israel? As a nation, Israel had departed from the Lord. The ten tribes, meant here by Israel, had revolted from the appointed worship of God at Jerusalem, when under Jeroboam they separated themselves from the dominion of Judah. Instead of keeping the feasts and sacrifices appointed by the Lord, they worshipped the golden calves at Dan and Bethel, and bowed down to Baal and Ashteroth. It was this idolatrous worship which made them backsliders. But the Lord kindly invites them to "return,"

addresses them still as "children" of Abraham, and promises to "heal their backslidings," which he would do by taking them once more under his care and protection.

This invitation and promise were alike slighted; the anger of God therefore fell upon them; and they were carried into captivity, from which they have not yet returned.

This is the *literal, temporal* meaning of the passage.

But God's word cannot fall to the ground. There was doubtless in backsliding Israel a remnant that knew and feared the Lord. As in the times of Elijah there was in Israel an Obadiah who feared the Lord greatly, a hundred prophets of Jehovah hidden in caves, and seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal so doubtless there were vessels of mercy in the days of Jeremiah among the ten revolted tribes. This we know was the case in the days of Hezekiah; for when he sent posts throughout all Israel and Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba, and wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh to keep the passover at Jerusalem, though most "laughed them to scorn and mocked them, nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem." (2 Chron. xxx. 10, 11.)

This was also in the days of King Josiah, in the latter part of whose reign, and previous to the great passover, Jeremiah prophesied, (Jer. i. 2,) as is evident from 2 Chron. xxxv. 17: "And the children of Israel (as distinguished from the children of Judah) that were present kept the passover at that time, and the feast of unleavened bread seven days."

And who shall say that this invitation by Jeremiah to backsliding Israel was not the cause of some, if not many, of the children of Israel renouncing their idols, and coming to worship the Lord at Jerusalem? If so, it had a *temporal* fulfilment; and if among them, as we may reasonably hope, there were elect vessels of mercy, it would be fulfilled to them *spiritually*; for among them there were doubtless some, if not many, who had backslidden from the Lord. "Evil communications corrupt good manners;" and it seems, therefore, hardly possible that the prevailing corruption and idolatry of Israel should not have exerted a baneful influence even over the true worshippers of God. These would feel that they had backslidden, if not openly yet secretly, if not outwardly yet inwardly, if not by an idolatrous knee yet by an idolatrous heart. To such were the invitation and promise *spiritually* addressed, and by them *spiritually* understood.

And to us poor Gentiles—or at least to those among us who feel to have backslidden from the Lord—to us does this invitation and promise in an especial manner *spiritually* belong. To every poor penitent backslider is the invitation *spiritually* addressed, and round him does the promise fold its tender arms. As regards us, the *temporal* meaning is past, and the *prophetical* interpretation is future; in these, therefore, we have no interest. But the

spiritual meaning continues, and will continue, while there is a poor penitent backslider to invite or to console.

This *spiritual* meaning it is which the ministers of the gospel have especially to handle and set forth. The *temporal* interpretation they may look back upon; the *prophetical* they may look forward unto—and, indeed, without some understanding of them much of the word of God, at least as regards the letter, must be unintelligible; but it is the *spiritual* meaning which they must look into. The two former they may see; this they must feel. Many able ministers of the New Testament have not seen, or, if seen, have almost wholly disregarded the past and future interpretations of the promises and invitations of the Old Testament. Regardless of the shell, they have fastened on the kernel. But every sent servant of God has seen, and felt, and testified of the present—their *spiritual* and experimental meaning.

And the *prophetical* meaning will be accomplished when God brings backsliding Israel literally to himself, and says to his ancient people, cast off for a time but now restored, “Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings.”

It is from not seeing this *prophetical*, and therefore at present unfulfilled interpretation, that the non-backsliding advocates have made such woful mistakes. They have argued as if Israel had fully, finally, and irrecoverably departed from the Lord; and as if there were no mercy in store for her—in other words, they have considered her as an apostate, not as a backslider. Now, as far as regards the *individuals* of that existing time, they certainly did depart from the Lord—at least the great bulk of them, and never did return. But viewed as a *nation*, Israel is not apostate. To constitute apostacy, either nationally or individually, two things are absolutely necessary: 1. never to have been elected of God; and 2., which is a consequent upon the first, never to be restored. Now, neither of these two things is true of Israel as a nation; for, 1. it is God's chosen people; and 2. will one day be restored. Thus, according to the strictest analogy of faith, and in entire harmony with the received sense of the word, God's ancient people is not apostate, but “backsliding Israel.”

These backslidings will be healed when “the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.” (Isaiah xi. 11, 12.)

And then, and not till then, will each and all of these three distinct interpretations shine forth in full and united lustre—the

temporal in the literal restoration of Israel, the *spiritual* in their being all taught of the Lord, and the *prophetical* in the complete and perfect fulfilment of every promise and every invitation contained in the Old Testament.

The three interpretations will not then be distinct in time and partial in application, but will be all united in present and general fulfilment. Nor will there then be any dispute about their meaning, for "the watchmen shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion." (Isaiah lii. 8.) "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. xxxi. 34.)

GOD FAITHFUL TO HIS PROMISES; BEING OUR ONLY REFUGE IN DARK AND TRYING TIMES, OR IN AFFLICTIVE PROVIDENCES.

BY JOHN RUSK.

(Continued from page 171.)

This is good, and must be waited for; and happy is that man that gets it, though he has waited never so long, "for it is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." You know "we are saved by hope;" and this is good. But, alas, when God first takes us in hand, how very impatient we are! What struggling and striving to get out of our trouble! We are "like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke." But "tribulation worketh patience;" and this "patiently waiting" is for the law of faith: "For the isles shall wait for his law." And as this faith gains ground, and God is pleased to shine on our path, we are brought in time to understand that these trials are the lot of all that fear God; and at times feel much quietness, thinking, Who knows but this may be for my good? Often, too, we find encouraging passages of Scripture, such as, "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;" "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me;" "They shall not be ashamed that wait for me," and the like, which are attended with a sweet comforting power. And it is "through patience and comfort of the Scriptures that we have hope." Thus, "it is good that a man should patiently wait (for the law of faith) and quietly hope (through patience and comfort of the Scriptures) for the salvation of God," which shows the impropriety of that hasty spirit that we are all prone to: "Be not as the horse or the mule;" "I will guide thee with mine eye."

4. *Affliction* is another "good" thing, and it is intended to stop us in our evil pursuits. As David says, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." Now, God is pleased to afflict us in five ways. 1. Sometimes by *letting us be under cruel oppression*, and that for a long

time; this was the case with the children of Israel. Pharaoh laid heavy burdens on them, and wanted them to make bricks without straw; and the more they complained the more heavily they were burdened. But say you, "What was the use of this affliction?" I answer, It was of a threefold use to many of them. 1. To bring them to seek God as their chief good, for you read, "In their affliction they will seek me early." 2. To make them pray: "Is any afflicted, let him pray." 3. By prayer it proved their eternal election: "For God will avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him." Therefore it is of use. It is also of use to fit those vessels of wrath for destruction that fight against God's family; for better for such had they never been born, or that a mill stone were tied round their neck, and they cast into the sea, than they should offend one of these little ones that believe in him. And this is called affliction. "I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters." (Exodus iii. 7.)

2. Another way is by *walking contrary to us in providence*. We shall be very diligent in the use of all means, but he blasts the work of our hands. One providence after another shall look favourable, and we think that he will now appear; but no—his time is not come, and therefore he cuts off this and that supply. This friend does not appear as we expected, and the other friend becomes an enemy. And if we have plenty of work, we have little or no strength; or if plenty of health, no work; and thus we sow much, but reap little.

But you say, "What is the use of all this?" I answer, Various; for 1. it will curb a covetous spirit; it was for this God smote Ephraim. 2. It will curb a light and trifling spirit also, when sanctified to us. And 3. the soul generally prospers most under a frowning providence. Take the following texts: "I know thy tribulation and thy poverty, but thou art rich." "God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith." "The abundance of their joy and their poverty." "The spoiling of the Hebrews' goods was taken joyfully, when they knew they had a better and far more enduring substance."

But, on the other hand, worldly prosperity is often attended with barrenness of soul: "He granted them their request, but sent leanness into their soul." But when this poverty has been sanctified, and we, knowing what a dreadful thing it would be to have the reins on our own neck, have been brought to submit to it, we shall afterwards choose it: "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

Now, a frowning providence is an affliction, as you read, "Though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers." And we often find the word from a tried preacher's mouth more precious, and can see eye to eye with him, when every thing else looks dark according to reason, and matters appear to get worse and worse in temporal

things. But how sweet a little is when it comes in this way: "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith."

But, before I proceed, you may ask me a question, which may be as follows: "Pray, are not oppression and a frowning providence common to all men, to one as well as another?" I answer, Yes, they are; the same trials that come upon the children of God (many of them) shall be on a wicked man. But the difference is not in the affliction, but in the management of the blessed Spirit, humbling us under our afflictions, and making them turn to good account; whereas, the wicked come out of their afflictions like a fool brayed in a mortar.

3. I therefore proceed to another affliction, which is, *violent temptations*: but in this, as in other things, we must follow the Lord, for he was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Say you, "That has often puzzled me, for I think there are many things I am tempted to, that Christ, being holy, harmless, and undefiled, never could be." To which I answer, If there is one thing you are tempted to in which there is sin in being thus tempted, whatever that particular thing is, Christ was not tempted to it; for take notice of the latter part of the verse: "Yet without sin." Now, to make it more clear, I will mention one sin that we are sure the Lord Jesus could not be tempted to like unto us; and I will prove it by the word. James says, "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts." Now, in this point there is sin, and therefore Christ was not tempted like unto us on this head. Mark, it is the man's own lusts. But hear Christ's own words: "The prince of this world cometh, but hath nothing in me." No; the Lord Jesus could defy them all on this head. "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" Pilate's wife said, "Have thou nothing to do with the blood of this just person, for I have suffered many things in a dream because of him." And the devils called him the Holy One of God.

Now, in respect of temptation arising from inward corruption, or being drawn away or enticed by it, Christ never was. But various are the temptations of Satan. He laboured hard to make Job curse his God, and worked upon his wife as an engine to accomplish his wicked design. He will tempt to presumption, as he did Christ: "Cast thyself down," said he, on the pinnacle of the temple. David, feeling this temptation to presumption, prays against it; "Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins." He moved David to number the people; he tempted him to uncleanness, and to murder Uriah. He tempted Peter with fleshly affection for Christ, in which you may see the bowels of Arminians. But say you, "They are free-willers." I know it, and Peter was not much better when he said, "I will go with thee to prison and to death; I will not deny thee."

Now, as for fleshly affections, Christ expressly palms it on the devil: "Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me." And when the devil was permitted to sift Peter, you find it was

not all at once, but a distance took place for a time between Peter and his Lord: "Peter followed him afar off." And, after this, he denied him with oaths and curses. You see what the best saint is when left for a moment. Satan tempted the incestuous person to take his father's wife: and there is a time to go into temptation, and a time to come out. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." This is a going *in*; and "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly *out* of temptation."

And if you prosper in temporal things, he will tempt you to covetousness. This is often the case; hence the caution, "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." Again: "Which some having coveted, have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." David, feeling this begin to work, says, "Incline my heart to thy testimonies, and not unto covetousness." And, again: if you are poor, he will tempt you to cozen, cheat, defraud, overreach, take an advantage; and if left for a moment you will slip, and in so doing weaken your spiritual might. This prayer well becomes us: "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe." And, to speak from experience, I feel it best to be under cruel oppression. I say it is a safer path than to have too much liberty. I know my cursed nature is such, that I am not to be trusted one moment; and there is no knowing where it would end, were it not for the furnace of affliction. A hint to the wise is enough. Mr. Hart justly observes in his hymn:—

"Ten thousand baits the foe prepares,
To catch the wandering heart;
And seldom do we see the snares,
Before we feel the smart."

Again. When God is searching the heart and trying the reins, in order to discover all the hidden evils of our nature, that we may be brought as perishing sinners to Christ Jesus, Satan will tempt us to despair; and tell us God's people are holy. And he will set before us all the commandments, both in law and gospel; such as, "The grace of God teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts;" "Be ye holy, for I am holy;" "He that forsaketh sin shall find mercy;" "He that is born of God sinneth not." "Now," says Satan, "you see you are led captive by me; and the moment I tempt, that moment you fall." But he never tells us where our strength lies. No, Satan is not divided against himself. But in this way he tempts, not to drive us to *self*-despair—that is good, and what God aims at; but Satan aims at *black* despair—to despair of the mercy of God. Hence he will set before us every hypocrite and imposter; and bring such scriptures to prove it, that we cannot but see it is so, and fear that we shall make an awful end. He will show us their attainments and how far they went. Very often, too, he will influence people, if they hear of the downfall of a hypocrite, to bring the news to us to make our hearts sink when we hear it. This is adding to the grief of those that God wounds, and helping forward their calamity.

Again. When we are delivered, Satan puts on his gown and

cassock; he is transformed. "Well," says he, "God has done much for you, and it becomes you to do all you can for God;" and away go our eyes from Jesus, and we attempt to grow in holiness by looking at the commandments. He will often, too, pick out some that appear ornaments to their profession, and yet do not profess the truth as it is in Jesus, and set them before us as examples. Now, this was the case with the Galatians, and Paul says they were bewitched: and this is often brought about by having itching ears, hearing false preachers that zealously affect us, but not well.

Again. Another way Satan tempts is this. If God has favoured us with a clear experience, and created the fruit of the lip to tell it to others, Satan shortly comes, so changed that we do not know our old acquaintance. Says he, "How few there are that have such a bright experience as yours! what liberty you have in telling it! God surely has intended you for a great work, namely, the work of the ministry; you will shine brighter and brighter; thousands and thousands will come to hear you." And with this logic he will puff us up, so that we are tempted to condemn many that are weak in the faith, and we often slight them as being unworthy of our notice. Now, what he aims at here is, to make us wiser than our teachers; to lessen them in our esteem, and bring us to neglect the ordinances of God's house. And what is it all for? Why, to exalt ourselves. He laboured hard with the Corinthians; they were zealous of spiritual gifts, and some were puffed up. But Paul tells them that charity was the more excellent way, and exhorts them to follow it; telling them that if they speak with the tongue of angels, if destitute of charity, they are nothing.

Another way he tempts is this. If we find a delight in reading a good book, he will tempt us to put it away, telling us we neglect the Bible. If happy in reading the Bible, says he, "What did you buy so many good books for? you never read them." And if we are happy in writing our experience, he will urge us to read good books or stop us.

Another way that he tempts is: if we are beclouded, dark, in bondage, or at a distance from God, then he will tempt us to read every thing, either in books or the Bible, about hypocrites; whereas, we are never told to follow after bondage, misery, or distress, but charity. This he does to stir up our unbelief, slavish fear, and hardness of heart; and aims at setting God before us as angry, so that we murmur at our hard lot, and think that nobody is like us; which makes us ungrateful, backward to a throne of grace, and makes us live below our privileges. And often he gains much ground here.

Again. Another way he tempts us is this, namely, to cast off all trust and confidence in God as a God of providence. God intends to teach us to live by faith, which is opposed to sight. Now, the Lord will often let our case get very bad here, in order to display his own almighty power when there is no eye to pity nor hand to help us, that it may make a lasting impression of gratitude and thankfulness on our hearts; as you read, "He suffered thee to

hunger, to prove thee, to know what was in thy heart, to do thee good in thy latter end." In this way he dealt with the great apostle Paul, and many others. But Satan tries to pervert the whole of it, by suggesting that trusting in the Lord is a vain thing. He laboured hard in this way with Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Asaph, and in Job's friends against Job. Satan aims at bringing us back to his drudgery again. You may see the same in the children of Israel: "Can God furnish a table? can he give us flesh to eat? Would God that we were in Egypt, where we were fed to the full!" Say you, "What a rebellious set they were!" Yes, so they were. But are we a whit better? I can feel the whole of it in my heart, and so can you if you have any feeling at all. Now, all these things, and many more, come from the devil himself.

Having, therefore, dropped a hint or two on the temptations of Satan, I will mention five things as preventives against them, or if fallen into, ways of escape out; and nothing short of these will do.

Now, 1. we are commanded to watch and pray, that our faith may be increased; for when faith gets very strong, the devil runs off: "Whom resist, stedfast in the faith." Thus we must pray for faith, and persevere in it, taking no denial.

2. We must plead the unconditional promises, such as this: "I will give you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy."

3. Every enemy we ever had is three. I say, every enemy we ever had that wishes our eternal destruction is three; and I know of no more, namely, the world, the flesh, and the devil. And these are all conquered by the Lord Jesus Christ. By "the world," I understand carnal, earthly men, hypocrites; together with all its flatteries and frowns. Now, says Christ, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." But if I had no interest in this victory, he would never tell me so. By "flesh," I understand indwelling sin, or the old man. Now, Christ says our old man was crucified with him; and we put off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. If, therefore, we put them off, and Christ took them when he was eight days old, and afterwards they were nailed to the cross, then they are far enough from us; and God will never impute them to that man who trusts in the satisfaction of his dear Son. And, lastly, "the devil:" "That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil;" for "he spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them on the cross." And what does this teach us? I answer, In all our prayer to have an eye to this victory, and to entreat the blessed Spirit to direct our faith to a bleeding Saviour on the cross; as you read, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." This standard is the Root of Jesse, which is to stand as an ensign to the people. I remember once having a clear view of this victory, and precious it was to my soul; and not only once, but many times I have found

it sweet; so what I write is from a blessed experience of it in my own heart.

4. We must plead the atonement of Christ, that we may have a fresh application of it again and again to our consciences; and this is the way to get the victory over Satan: "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." This testimony, Mr. H. says, is the new birth; as you read in the third chapter of John's Gospel; and in plain English, it is the Holy Ghost, for the Spirit produces the new birth, and the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

5. We must plead the spotless righteousness of Christ Jesus, which, when we get, will at once overcome the devil; and this you may see in Joshua, after God had clothed him with change of raiment. "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan! Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

Now, I know of no better way either to avoid the devil's temptations, or if fallen into, to get out, than these five. But remember, no deliverance here will be long, for Satan never rests; he is unwearied in his attempts. May this teach us to be constantly crying to our God against him! But all I have said of these temptations is good to bear, that we may not be ignorant of his devices, but watch against them; and they are called by Peter afflictions. "Be sober; be vigilant; for your adversary, the devil, goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist, stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." Then, says Peter, "No temptation hath happened unto you but what is common to man," and therefore our case cannot be singular.

4. Another affliction is *the bondage of a broken law*. David calls it a prison; and it is often felt so when the Lord hides his face. It has the following ingredients in it: slavish fear, or a sense of the anger of God, hardness of heart, pride, enmity, self-will, contractedness of spirit, unbelief, darkness; backwardness to prayer, reading, hearing, and Christian conversation; torment, misery, and distress, and wanting to quarrel with every one; which stirs up all our evil tempers, and we are sullen; cannot submit to God nor one another, nor yet confess; and here we shall lie for ever, if Christ do not open the prison doors to us that are bound. See this largely treated of in Mr. H.'s "*Child of Liberty in Legal Bondage*." But all this is of great use, that we may know the value of gospel liberty, and not abuse it: likewise, that we may know where we once were, and where all the children of men are by nature; that we may know what the fall of man is, and that we should have continued there as well as they, but for matchless grace. All this is "good," teaching us to become proper objects for the clemency of Christ. And this is called affliction, as Jeremiah says in his Lamentations: "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall; my soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled within me."

5. Once more. *Bodily and family affliction.* This way of afflicting us is to bring down all the pride of our natural strength, a thing we glory much in, for "the glory of young men is their strength." But God will stain the pride of all human glory; and he often begins with the body and ends with the heart, as you read, "He lays afflictions on their loins; he brings down their hearts with labour." (Psalm cvii.) "He is chastened also with pains upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain." (Job xxxiii. 19.) But "afterwards He is gracious to him," and it ends in a deliverance from the pit of hell. And it was so with Job, when he had boils from head to foot; which was, in fact, showing him outwardly what he was inwardly, which all along he had been ignorant of. Say you, "Inwardly? Does not God say he was a perfect and upright man?" Yes, and so he was in Christ; for Paul says, "We are complete in him:" and so he was, as created anew, or the new man; but no more so by nature than you and I are. What says the prophet Isaiah to this? "From the sole of the foot even unto the head we are full of wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores:" and "as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man."

And not only bodily, but family afflictions also; unruly, untoward children; and sometimes all ill together, confined to bed. Say you, "Of what use is this?" Why, it destroys, when sanctified, those corrupt, inordinate, affections we are prone to when every thing goes on easy and quiet, and greatly nips the old man; leads us to self-denial, and to feel for the weak; and much gratitude flows out for every little strength of body to do a day's work, or to go to hear a sermon; and it furnishes us with a petition to God, "Lord, thou hast promised to strengthen us on the bed of languishing, and make all our bed in our sickness." With such promises as these we are helped by the Spirit to plead, which many are ignorant of; yea, God's own people, unless they have been in this furnace. It likewise deadens us to the world, the spirit, company, and practices of it. And when we are brought to accept the punishment of our iniquity, the Lord remembers his covenant. And when we can see it is the chastisement of a tender Father, who loves us too well to let us have our own way, and have given us a spirit of meekness, then we are brought for that time to choose affliction. This is one of the sweetest paths I ever knew. Thus, under oppression, a frowning providence, violent temptations, bodily afflictions and family afflictions, we are long exercised; and all this is "good," as David says: "But it is good for me that I was afflicted." Submission, a lying passive, understanding God's mind and will in all things, is agreeable to the text, "Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

(To be continued.)

In prayer, it is better to have a heart without words, than words without a heart.—*Bunyan.*

THE DEEP THAT COUCHETH BENEATH.

Very dear Brother in the Lord Jesus, the "Friend that loveth at all times," and sweet Brother born for the express purpose of adversity,—I have been allowed to bless his name this morning, for inclining your heart to notice me, a poor unworthy man, who am making my way through a dispensation too deep, mysterious, confounding, and complicated to be investigated, penetrated, or unfolded by anything human. I have to pass through 'deeps, through deaths, through darkness, through temptations, through sins, through sorrows, through perils, comprising a great fight of afflictions in soul travail, for the fulfilment of the Lord's word in my deliverance. Being unskilful in a life of faith, I reel, stagger, and am confounded at the hard things, and wine of astonishment, the fire and the water in the paths of judgment leading to the wealthy place which I hope one day to arrive at. A miracle indeed!

But the Lord is on high, though I am often below, doing the business of faith in great waters, crying unto the Lord for the manifestation of the depths of his pity, for displays of divine wisdom in their multifarious and manifold variety, and the boundless and the unspeakable stores of Omnipotence to help me in the time of need; concluding that if ever I am delivered from these perilous deeps my joy will be too great, that I shall certainly die with a sense of the wonderful deliverance. But though I have the sentence of death within me, and all seems to be death around me, my anchor and anchorage are good. Hope buries itself in God. Prayer calls in the skill of an almighty Pilot, who holds the winds in his fist, and the waters in the hollow of his hand; and when he once comes on board to take the helm, faith resigns the vessel into his hands, the charge becomes his own, and his honour and interest are engaged to bring all safe to land. Not one object of his care ever suffered shipwreck. And indeed, my brother, how should they? He who once said, "Peace, be still!" is no less powerful and attentive to his church now than he was when the disciples awoke him with, "Lord, save, or we perish."

My very dear friend, your letter contains some things that I have experienced, and I desire to acknowledge the Lord's hand in directing you to write in the way you have done. Some time ago, I was half inclined to beg a line upon fellowship and communion with Jesus, and with each other in Him. Self-denial, taking up a daily cross and following Jesus, are lessons of an experimental nature not soon learnt; and I have much to learn, and much to pass through, I think, before I shall attain to Enoch's portion: "He walked with God."

The Lord, however, condescends to favour me with his company for a little time; but short, sweet, and seldom are his visits. In his absence what a mass of sin and death, darkness and confusion I feel! My power, wisdom, understanding, light, joy, rest, peace, and treasure are then all gone. I cannot see, feel, or stir, without the

mighty operations of the Holy Ghost. What the Lord is pleased to make of me, that I am by grace; all hungerings, thirstings, lookings and waitings upon God, are acts of God in me. All strugglings for life in the midst of death; going to the throne of God with a groan, cry, or sigh for the Lord's presence, or for his direction in the way, for the knowledge of his will in Christ Jesus, or for whatever I stand in need of, are among the acts of faith, whose diligent hand maketh rich, when it is allowed to dip into the gracious store of Jesus. Weakness then becomes a barter for strength; misery for mercy; folly for wisdom; sorrow for joy; poverty, bankruptcy, hunger, cold, and nakedness, emptiness and wretchedness, make way for Christ and his riches. An empty vessel holds most; and it is more blessed for Jesus to give than to receive, for if he condescends to accept an offering at our hands, we only return him his own grace.

Communion is founded upon union. All communications from Jesus are sovereign acts of divine favour. "The wind bloweth where it listeth;" the when, and the where, and the how are with him. How precious are his thoughts when communicated! How precious the rock when it yields honey, and oil, and living water! How precious the cross of Jesus, the cleft of the Rock, and his dying words, "It is finished!" How bitter the gall, how sharp the vinegar, how dreadful the agonies of "Eli, Eli, lama, sabachthani?" How cold the clammy sweat, forcing itself through the closing pores before he bows his head and gives up the ghost! But how bright the resurrection morn, when the Sun of Righteousness arose, and he was declared to be the Son of God by the Spirit of Holiness with divine power, having deprived death of its sting and the grave of its victory. He salutes the early visitors with "All hail!" "Go, tell my brethren." How precious the gospel mountain, Mount Zion, when it flows down with new wine, and "the heavens of Jacob drop down dew" upon the land of Joseph—Immanuel's land, the land of promise, the "inheritance divided by line, not to be sold or forfeited for ever."

How precious is the communion of saints in Jesus, when he is pleased to open their hearts and mouths to speak of his kingdom and his power; to "talk of all his marvellous acts," his wonders and the judgments of his mouth. When the saint goes abroad to see the brethren, to see Christ in them, and to have fellowship and communion with Jesus in them, what a blessed discovery! "I in them, and they in me, that they may be made perfect in one." When Jesus makes one in the midst, what a lovely sight to see brethren "dwell together in unity," "keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace," and "looking upon the things of others;" bearing each other's burdens, and so fulfilling the law of Christ!

In your letter you tell of a state of simple dependence upon Jesus, referring all states, frames, times, spirits, and ways to the Lord's government; and that to maintain a life of close walking and communion with the Lord, prayer, mortification, soul-labour, wrestling, and warfare must be the exercise. I fully acquiesce in all you say,

and can see the way in which the Lord glorifies himself in the experience of his people, and hope to follow on in this good old way. I thank you for the print of your footsteps; I shall be glad if I am enabled to hit them.

I have often wondered how it is that there is so little fellowship and communion with the Lord's people; that those in the furnace are so little visited by those that are out of it, and those of the Lord's people that are drenched and half burnt in fire and water, drilled by severe discipline, and held up to the wind to be winnowed, find so few companions in tribulation, so few that turn aside to ask Jerusalem how she does; though I feel persuaded that if there be any divine life, it is to be found in the furnace. These things have at times perplexed me not a little. Since I have been in the furnace, "in my humiliation, my judgment has been taken away." I have formerly passed my judgment upon men's states, books, sermons, or things. But since I have been in the furnace I have been judged and condemned within for my presumption. One day it struck me that Christ wears the breast-plate of judgment, and that there is a strict connexion between the ephod and the breast-plate. Paul knew nothing by himself; therefore, when we take the ephod and inquire of the Lord, and the Lord is pleased to tell us what is right and what is wrong, we then only have judgment according to truth, and therefore only then can it be depended on. In this way I desire to "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good."

Respecting the state of some of the Lord's people, if I understand you rightly, the dearth which is spread over them is owing to the world within them. Certainly, God and mammon, the love of the Father and the love of the world, Christ and Belial, cannot stand, unite, or dwell together, for "where the treasure is, there will the heart be also." What a mercy to be delivered from this present world; to have the affections set upon things above; to have Christ for our Portion and our Sovereign, whose throne is for ever and ever! "The government is upon his shoulder." Aaron of old bore the tribes of Israel upon his shoulder, as well as upon his breast; so Jesus bears the persons of his redeemed, and all their weighty affairs, as King of Zion, engraved upon his heart. And cherished by his breast, as great High Priest, he succours and supports in every trying hour the persons of his elect, and ever presents them pure and perfect before the throne.

My dear friend, I believe you pray for me; continue this act I beseech you, for I need your prayers much. I want humility, wisdom, and patience; indeed I want Jesus, with all that he is and has for poor sinners. Will you ask him to abide with me, that I may abide in him?

The Lord has been very gracious to me in many respects since I last wrote. Through mercy, my head affection has in a measure subsided. Sometimes I think that this will be a cross for life, at other times I hope the Good Physician will bind up all and heal all; all is possible with him. In my late trouble I had to

fight my way through seas of affliction, sword in hand, when the host of hell "came out like a whirlwind to scatter me;" but the Lord was on my side, therefore mine enemies could not prevail. The gospel armour and artillery, the sword, the bow, and the shield have been tried and proved; and through the Lord's conquest the victory has been obtained. The immortal Banner is Christ crucified: when once the Spirit of the Lord erects this standard, Satan knows the victory is ours. But rage and enmity against Christ, knowing what he has done, prompt him to fight desperately. Then come the close quarters with sword and shield the horrors of darkness, the noise of confusion, "garments rolled in blood," a dispute and a fight upon life and death eternal. When the believer finds the battle going against him, and he is beaten down, he recovers his strength with, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy! when I fall I shall arise;" and with strong cries and tears I have been enabled to obtain the victory, through the blood of the Lamb. God grant that I may never see such a war any more! Eternal thanks to the Lord who "giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

"Encompass'd round with fears,
Temptations, sins, and pains;
Yet still the palm she bears,
For grace triumphant reigns."

I feel myself a very poor creature, unfit for anything. For the most part I am kept very poor in spirituals, and very low in my feelings; seldom read anything but my Bible, and feel but very little disposed to read books. If I want to know anything I go to the Lord and ask, often having to wait long at the throne, but generally getting an answer at some time. If I meet with troubles, which I do a great many, I take them to the Lord, get upon my watch-tower, and these in the end generally bring me something. If I want a favour of a temporal nature, I go and beg it; and if I see it drop out of the hand of Jesus, it is a double blessing. I seldom move any way without prayer, and have been enabled for the most part to watch the Lord's hand narrowly. The church's company, favours, and affections I endeavour to put to my Lord's account. This by no means lessens their favours. If enemies rise up, they cannot stir without God. I am much disposed to sloth and sleep, unless the Lord send me trouble; this I am born to, for bonds and afflictions await me. I consider myself a prisoner of the Lord, in the court of the King's prison. At times I feel no wish to move without the Lord; sometimes I fret at my cross, murmur inwardly, look back at the path I have trodden, collect all my troubles, sorrows, and hardships into a great heap, and mourn over my seemingly hard lot, and conclude that there never was such a poor mortal—labouring, struggling, fighting, and praying to get out of my difficulties and distresses these many years, and no nearer yet. This worldly sorrow worketh death; and I reap the fruit of my rebellion and ingratitude by dwelling in a dry land.

Of late I have had much death and weakness, so that when I

have gone to the throne I have hardly strength to sigh out my desires. Lord's day morning was a good time with me; in the evening I had bonds. Generally I have my Lord's presence once a week. This appears seldom, but I believe his absence as well as his presence is necessary; for when I have nothing in hand, and all that I appear to be—a poor man with death and sin, pride, having nothing to feast on, is obliged to retire.

Christ is the Alpha, the Beginning of Jehovah's works and ways, in his mediatorial character and capacity; the centre, fulness, glory, and blessedness to and for his church; the Omega, the Finisher, and the End—the perfection of all beauties.

In your solitary dwelling may you be favoured with the opening bosom of this Everlasting Lover, until you breathe out your redeemed spirit into the ocean of everlasting bliss!

I subscribe myself your companion in tribulation, and, if I may be allowed, your fellow in the fellowship of Christ.

With respect and affection, yours in the Lord. Grace be with you, amen!

K—C—.

R. I.

A LETTER BY THE LATE WILLIAM HUNTINGTON.

My dear Friend,—I am at present but very poorly. I preached and broke bread last Lord's day, but had hard work to stand it. I went home in a high fever, took medicine, and went to bed, and there continued until this morning, Tuesday. I am much better, but very weak. I thank you kindly for your favour to the poor man; may God reward you.

Bondage through the fear of death, my dear friend, is owing to blindness of mind, and sense of sin, ignorance of Christ, and being without hope; but life and immortality being brought to light by the gospel, the old veil upon the heart gives way, and when the complete and finished work of Christ appears, a foundation for hope is laid; and when hope and expectation rise in the soul, being begotten and encouraged by the invitations, promises, and precedents we see before us in the word of God, these of course will counteract despair, legal bondage, and the fear of death, because we are saved by hope, or hope is annexed to salvation.

Be not too hasty, my son, in drawing conclusions. God's ways and thoughts of us are not our ways and thoughts. He hath granted thee a hope and expectation of Jesus Christ: he hath given thee faith to believe the truth, though not the strongest appropriating act of faith; he has often sent thee refreshings and encouragements; he has enabled thee to acknowledge me as his servant; he has not suffered thee either to hate the light or shun it, but to come to it; he has put his fear in thy heart, so as not to suffer thee to depart from him in his means, in his church, in his word; and he has given thee a heart to love them that love him in sincerity and truth, and enlightened thee to see the difference between the Shepherd's

voice and that of strangers; and these tokens for good are not found in every one that makes a profession, but, on the contrary, and if I might speak what I really believe, I think the Lord's good Spirit sendeth these few hints to thee, whether thou believe it or not.

Mr. S. has lost his eldest daughter, the darling of his family, with a few days' illness, without knowledge or relish for the best things. This is dying indeed!

Bless God for a good hope, and let us not despise the day of small things, though we may warrantably pray and hope for greater.

Tender my respects to your spouse, and his excellency the Welsh Ambassador.

Your willing and affectionate friend and servant in Christ Jesus,
W. H., S. S.

EDITORS' REVIEW.

A Protest Against the Doctrine, "That a Child of God cannot Backslide; That the Lord does not Chastise his Children for Sin; That Sin in the Thought of the Heart is as Offensive to God as Sin in the Outward Action." By John Kershaw.—Groombridge, London.

(Continued from page 191.)

In taking up so much space by observations of our own on the non-backsliding doctrine in our last Number, we feel that we have hardly done justice to Mr. Kershaw. In the quotation which we made from the "Protest" in our May Number, we gave but one part of the question—what we may call the bright side, the sunny aspect—the view of a believer under the sweet influences and divine anointings of the Blessed Spirit. There is another side—the northern aspect, when the Lord is absent and sin present, when the sun withdraws his shining, when there is neither dew nor rain, when darkness falls upon the soul, and the beasts of prey come forth; in a word, when a child of God *backslides*. Unless we present this side of the picture, as sketched by Mr. Kershaw's firm and faithful hand, we shall not do justice either to him, or to his subject—either to the portrait, or to the painter. Our readers, therefore, may consider the Review in our June Number as a long, a very long parenthesis, and should read the following extract in connexion with that which we gave in our May Number, 160th page.

"My dear friends, our souls at such times are going forward, making advances in the divine life, under the influence and power of the Spirit,* the new man of grace in the soul. But are these always the feelings of our soul? Alas! no.

* This strikes us as hardly correct. Mr. Kershaw here seems to us to confound two very distinct things—the Spirit of God, and the new man. The Scripture most plainly discriminates them. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit." (Rom. viii. 16.) The one is the Witness, the other the thing witnessed unto; the one is the Regenerator, the other the thing regenerated;

David, the man after God's own heart, expresses himself in very different language when his poor soul was under the temptations of Satan, and the workings of the flesh, the old man of sin. Hear what he says, 'My soul cleaveth to the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word.' (Psalm cxix. 25.) At this time both the old and new man were at work in his soul. Under the power of the old man his soul cleaved to the dust; under the influence of the new man of grace* his soul longed to feel more of the quickening power and grace of God. The indwelling and working of sin in his poor soul often made him sigh and groan, yea, and 'roar' before the Lord."

"Again, David says, 'He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in paths of righteousness, for his name's sake.' (Psalm xxiii. 3.) David's soul, like ours, when left to himself, the evils of his own heart, and the power of the old man of sin, wandered and strayed from the Lord; and the thoughts and imaginations of his heart were evil, foolish, and vain. Hence he says, 'I hate vain thoughts;' and again he says, 'Thou tellest my wanderings.' — 'For I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant.'"

"I solemnly declare, in the name and fear of the Lord, that there is not a heaven-born and Spirit-taught soul in this congregation, but what experimentally knows these things in a greater or lesser degree; and those who do not are out of the secret, and know not the spiritual warfare there is in the soul of every man of God. His soul is often wandering from the Lord, so that the pen of inspired truth warrants us in positively affirming that there is such a thing as backsliding.

"Again, David says, 'My soul refuseth to be comforted.' Under what influence was his soul at this time? Under that of the new man of grace? Oh! no; if that had been the case, he would have reasoned as on another occasion: 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.' This is the language of the new man of grace, to encourage the soul in its troubles and castings-down. But when he says, 'My soul refuseth to be comforted,' it is under the influence of a fretful spirit, the old man of sin; and thus we see, as I said before, that under the influence of grace the soul of a man of God advances in the divine life and in the ways of the Lord; but under the influence of the old man of sin he draws back.

"We have another witness, my friends, to bring forward from the word of God. Like the Bereans, let us be diligent in searching the Scriptures, whether these things are so. Job was a man of God. The Lord, speaking of him to Satan, said, 'Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in all the earth, a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil?' He had severe trials in the loss of his property and his family. In the midst of these trying dispensations his mind was kept calm, and his soul stayed upon the Lord, so that he could in his heart and soul say, 'The Lord gave and

the one is the Creator, the other the creature; the one is *God* the Spirit, the other the new *man*; the one is eternal, almighty, self-subsisting, the Third Person in the Blessed Trinity, the other is born in time, dependent upon divine operation, and acting only as acted upon.

* We are sorry to find fault with Mr. Kershaw's expression here, as we so much like his general drift; but we cannot give our assent to this expression. It is not "the influence of the new man of grace," but the influence of the Holy Spirit on the new man of grace, that causes the soul to move Godward. What is the new man of grace in itself? Has it of itself any power, any influence, any movement? No; it is passive—only acting as acted upon. David had the new man of grace when he walked on the roof of the king's house. But what influence had it upon him? Joseph in a similar or worse temptation came off victorious. Why? Not because of the influence of the new man of grace, but because the Blessed Spirit acted upon and influenced that new man. "We are the clay, and Thou the Potter." This distinction should never be lost sight of, as it is so connected with vital experience.

the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.' 'In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.' And when given up into the hands of Satan, with sore affliction upon his body, and his wife, who should have been a comfort and a help-mate for him in these calamities, said unto him, 'Curse God and die,' the Lord was still with him to comfort and support his soul, so that he said unto her, 'Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and not evil?' 'In all this did not Job sin with his lips.' Under the influence of the new man of grace,* Job could bless and praise the Lord in all his afflictions, and say, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;' he could 'kiss the rod, and Him that hath appointed it,' and say with Eli, 'It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.'

"How very different, however, were Job's feelings when, under the influence of the old man of sin, he cursed the day of his birth! He says many strange things: 'My soul chooseth strangling and death rather than life; even that it would please God to destroy me, that he would let loose his hand and cut me off.' (Chap. iii. &c.) Poor afflicted Job was not one of those who tell us it is nothing short of blasphemy to say that the soul of a good man can sin. He had such wretched sinful feelings in his soul at times as caused him to say, 'My soul is weary of life;' 'Behold I am vile;' 'Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.'

"Thus we see that when Job was under the influence of the new man of grace,* he could bless and praise the Lord in the midst of trouble; but when under the influence of the old man of sin, he murmured and repined."

As we believe that, by our copious extracts, we have already sufficiently shown Mr. Kershaw's general drift and line of argument, we shall make but one more from this part of the subject.

"We will now leave the chapter we have been commenting upon, and turn our attention to the 14th chapter of Hosea, which we are told is addressed to the Jews as a nation. This appears to be the stronghold of our opponents; and if it be removed, the foundation they build upon is gone.

"Israel as a nation was in many things typical of God's spiritual Israel. When they were in easy circumstances they forgot the Lord, forsook his ordinances, and backslided from him. But when brought into fresh troubles and given into the hands of their enemies, they repented of their sins, returned unto the Lord, and besought him that he would deliver them. In this the spiritual Israelite sees a portrait of himself. What the Lord says by the mouth of the prophet Hosea meets his case, and is designed by the Lord for his comfort: 'O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.' 'Take with you words, and turn to the Lord; say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render the calves of our lips. Ashur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods, for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy. I will heal their backsliding; (mark this, my friends; there must have been backslidings or there would have been none to heal;) I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away from them.' The Lord here says he will heal our backslidings and love us still.

"The word of the Lord by the prophet Hosea has been made a blessing to thousands of his family who never were of the Jewish nation, being Israelites spiritually and not naturally, who have backslidden from the Lord, but through grace have been enabled to return unto him, saying, 'Take away the burden of sin that lies upon my conscience; cleanse me, O Lord, from all iniquity; receive me graciously and love me freely.' And have they not met with a gracious reception? Oh yes; their backslidings have been healed, and the Lord has loved them freely, so that they have offered the sacrifice of praise to God continually, giving thanks unto his name.

"We have now gone through the doctrinal part of the first branch of our

* See note on page 214.

subject, and have proved, from the word of God and Christian experience, that a real child of God does sometimes draw back, but not to perdition. That a good, gracious man, under the power of indwelling sin, the allurements of the world, and the temptations of Satan, sometimes falls into outward sin, and thus backslides in heart as well as conduct from the Lord."

Though we may seem, perhaps, to have dwelt too long already upon this subject, and to have furnished a dissertation rather than a review, yet, from our anxiety fully to clear up our ground and to obviate every probable misapprehension, we cannot forbear adding a few more observations.

1. We think it not unlikely that our meaning may by some be ignorantly misunderstood, and by others wilfully misrepresented. The one may suppose, and the other say, we mean that a child of God may backslide from his eternal standing in Christ. We mean no such thing. That standing is unchangeable and irreversible. Subsisting from eternity, it is entirely independent of all that takes place in time. In it there is no advance, and from it there is no departure. Good frames do not put our names into the book of life, nor do bad frames blot them out. The "everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure" is independent of everything done in or done by the creature. But by "backsliding" we mean a departing from the Lord after having been brought near, a wandering from him, a sinning against him, a disobeying of his precepts, an indulgence in evil, a falling into anything in thought, word, or deed displeasing to God and forbidden in his holy word. And in order to distinguish the slips and falls of saints from the sins of the impenitent and ungodly, good men, at least in our own language, have for several generations used the word "backslide," which they have borrowed from the Old Testament, in strict accordance, as we showed in our last Number, with the analogy of faith.

And why should the word be objected to? Is it not convenient, not to say absolutely necessary, to have a distinct term to express a distinct thing? There is a manifest difference between the slips and falls of believers, and the sins of the ungodly; and there is an evident distinction between wilful transgressions impenitently persisted in, and such deviations and departures from the precepts of the gospel as are repented of and forsaken. To sin as Saul, and to sin as David; to betray as Judas, and to deny as Peter, are transgressions as different in nature and character, in motive, object, and result, as the individuals themselves who committed them. The word "backslide" is borrowed, then, from the Old Testament to express these slips and falls; and being strictly agreeable to the analogy of faith, and consecrated as it were by long use among the saints of God, what good ground can there be for its rejection?

2. But there may be others who admit that a child of God may backslide, yet who do not, perhaps, fully enter into our meaning, views, and feelings on this point. They may understand by the

word merely outward slips and falls—something gross and open, such as the world as well as the church may point the finger at. In order, therefore, to guard every avenue of misconception, we shall, at the risk of dwelling upon the subject even to prolixity and weariness, unfold what we really understand—nay, more than understand, what we daily feel, by backsliding from the Lord. So far, then, from limiting the word “backslide” to the *outward* slips and falls of believers, we extend its meaning far more widely, and consider that every *thought*, as well as every word and action by which we inwardly or outwardly depart from the Lord is a backsliding from his gracious Majesty.

There is “the backslider in heart,” (Prov. xiv. 14,) as well as the backslider in life. “The thought of foolishness is sin.” (Prov. xxiv. 9.) “Every imagination of the thoughts of man’s heart is only evil continually.” (Gen. vi. 5.) Thus every foolish thought, every vain thought, every proud thought, every selfish thought, every worldly thought, every vile thought—in a word, every thought of which God himself is not the Author and the Object, the beginning and the end, is a backsliding from Him. And why? Because it is an inward departing from the Lord, an inward preference of self, a turning aside in heart from the Fountain of living waters to hew out to ourselves a cistern, a broken cistern, that can hold no water.

It is because *heart-sins* are taken such little notice of, because the hideous evils that lurk and work within are so little felt and groaned under, that so many congratulate themselves on maintaining a decent outside. It is indeed a mercy of mercies to be preserved consistent and blameless before men. To be kept from evil is the next greatest blessing to being redeemed from evil; and it is better for a child of God to die out of the world than to live in it to bring a reproach upon the name of Jesus, which is, or should be, dearer to him than life itself. But it is a sad mistake to have the eyes turned so exclusively on what is passing without as not to notice what is going on within. It is not enough sedulously to wash the outside of the cup and platter, and to be so constantly occupied with maintaining the unsullied whiteness of its exterior as not to cast one glance on the dark lees that are fermenting and staining it within. Whatever dark and unseemly blots a child of God may perceive in another, he can see nothing outwardly in him so black as what he sees inwardly in himself; for in others he sees but a few symptoms of a disease with which he is himself infected to the very core—scattered plague-spots in them, indicative of a leprosy which is raging in his own vitals. But we must say that so low, so shallow, so superficial, and, we may add, so carnal views of sin are abroad, that its real nature and character are much hidden from the eyes of men. Thus by the word “backslider” many seem to understand some open notorious character, who has belonged to a church and done something very bad; and when the minister, about once every six months, addresses, at the end of his sermon, a word to “a poor backslider, if there

be one here present," all thoughts, if not all eyes, are instantly turned to some one individual—a solitary black sheep among the white-wooled flock. Why, if the poor man did but know his own heart, he would feel, if he did not say, that the greatest backslider among them stood in the pulpit; and the hearers, instead of turning their eyes outwardly, in all the pride of pharisaism, towards one poor publican, would turn their eyes inwardly upon themselves; and secretly cry, in the depths of self-abasement, each for himself, "God be merciful to me a backslider!"

As far, indeed, as the honour and glory of God, the cause of truth, the peace and prosperity of the church, and we may add, our own comfort—for sorrow is as sure to follow sin as the shadow follows the sun—so far as these important matters are concerned, it is an unspeakable blessing, a blessing valued by none so much, as by those who may have in any way forfeited it, to be kept from any approach to outward backsliding. But when we come to *inward* experience and the feelings of exercised souls, in this sense *all* the children of God are backsliders, "for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." And though we would not for a single moment put upon the same level inward and outward sins, yet when we come to real heart-work we fully believe that the greatest backslider in his own feelings will be he who knows most of sin and most of salvation, most of the Lord and most of himself; who has been brought most experimentally near the blessed Jesus, and therefore most painfully and clearly knows what it is to wander and depart from Him.

In order, therefore, to stain the pride of man and to bring down high looks, the Lord often so lays bare the secrets of the heart, and so brings its hidden evils to light, that the man who is brought and kept nearest to the Lord, and in whose life usually there is the least outward blemish, will often be, in his own feelings, the greatest backslider of all; whilst he whose life is little else but one continued reproach to the cause of truth, will perhaps deny that a child of God can backslide at all. Thus the more a man sees of the glory of the Lord, the more that he desires to have union and communion with Him, and the more that he is alive to the evil of sin and to his own wanderings and departings from God, the greater a backslider will he feel himself to be. In this sense, therefore, there is not a child of God on earth who is not a backslider; for "there is not a just man that doeth good and sinneth not;" (Eccle. vii. 20.) and if these backslidings of heart are not known and mourned over, well may we ask what light there is in the soul to see, or what life there is in the soul to feel?

Among the exercised family of God, then, no one dares lift up his head and say, "I am not a backslider;" for if he has not backslidden outwardly, he has most certainly backslidden inwardly a thousand times a day; and the same grace which made Paul call himself "the chief of sinners," and "less than the least of all saints," teaches every truly contrite soul to feel

each his own grief and his own sore; and such will say with Herbert—

“He came to seek poor sinners out,
And you and me the worst.”

3. But let none so misunderstand or misrepresent us as to infer from our representation of the continual backslidings in heart of every believer, that we thereby mean secretly to justify the sin and guilt of thus departing from the Lord. The testimony of the word of God, and we may add, the verdict of our own conscience, would sign our condemnation if we dared to insinuate so detestable a conclusion. No; we know too well the guilt and bondage which sin in every shape produces to dare to justify it. Sin ever is, ever must be that horrible thing which God hates, and which every child of God in his right mind hates too. Nor can his feelings be better expressed than in those lines by one who knew better than most living saints—if, indeed, any know so well—the depth of the fall and the riches of superabounding grace;—

“What tongue can fully tell
That Christian’s grievous load,
Who would do all things well,
And walk the ways of God;
But feels within foul envy lurk,
And lust, and work, engendering sin?”

“Poor, wretched, worthless worm!
In what sad plight I stand!
When good I would perform,
Then evil is at hand.
My leprous soul is all unclean,
My heart obscene, my nature foul.”

HART.

4. The objectors to the term “backslide,” we suspect, may be divided into two classes—those who object to the word, and those who object to the thing. That there are such is evident, for Mr. Kershaw mentions some who “tell us that it is nothing short of blasphemy to say that the soul of a good man can sin.” The former we have endeavoured to answer; we now turn to the latter.

Allow us, then, as in the sight of God, to ask you a few questions, and let the word of truth decide between us.

Can a child of God *sin*? If you say he cannot, what means this passage: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us?” (1 John i. 8.) According to this testimony, a man deceives himself, and the truth is not in him, who says that a child of God cannot sin.

Again. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John i. 9.) If a man confess his sins, he must have sins to confess, or he mocks God and deceives himself.

Again. “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with

the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 John ii. 1.) Does not John here declare that a child of God may sin; and that, if he sin, he has an advocate with the Father?

Again. "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it." (1 John v. 16.) A distinction is here drawn between "a sin unto death," and "a sin not unto death;" and a positive statement made that a child of God, "a brother," may commit the latter. Can anything be more plain or positive, or more evidently show that a child of God may sin?

Again. "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." (1 John v. 21.) Is it a sin to worship idols—inward, or outward; made by the heart, or made by the hand? If no sin, why John's warning? If a sin, then a child of God may commit it.

But can we not bring forward what not only the word of God and the conscience of the saints, but the common voice of mankind pronounces to be sins, and show that believers have committed them?

Is adultery a sin? David committed that. Is cursing and swearing a sin? Peter committed that. Is idolatry a sin? Solomon committed that. Are drunkenness, lying, incest, sins? Noah, Jacob, Lot, were guilty of them.

How any professing godliness can be so blind as not to see, or so hard as not to feel, that a child of God sins with well nigh every breath that he draws, we cannot understand. A good storm of guilt would soon teach them otherwise. A little of the wrath of God let down into their soul, a little godly fear in their heart, a little tenderness of conscience, a little seeing of light in God's light, a little lifting up of the veil of ignorance and unbelief, one five minutes' sight of self in its native hideousness and deformity, and, we may add, one minute's spiritual view of the glory and majesty of God, such as was given to Job, Isaiah, and Daniel, would crush them into the dust of self-abasement as sinners.

Did we not know there were persons professing godliness who say that sin is a non-entity—in other words, has no existence, and that a child of God cannot therefore sin, we could not believe that the word of God, the testimony of conscience, and the daily experience of the saints, could be so outfaced. As regards ourselves, we are as certain that we sin, that we backslide, that we depart from God, as that our lungs breathe, our heart beats, our fingers trace what we now write, and our eyes read what we have just written.

And O! would to God that we did not sin, did not backslide, did not disobey, did not depart and wander from the Lord! It is our greatest grief and heaviest burden. No wonder, therefore, that we are so strongly opposed to the non-backsliding doctrine, and feel determined, in God's name and strength, to oppose it whilst we have a heart to feel, a tongue to speak, and a hand to write.

As every branch of divine truth is in strictest harmony, so is error closely allied to error. "When bad men conspire, good men must combine," say those who speak in proverbs. And thus we may say, as there is a combination in truth, so there is a confederacy in error.

Mr. Kershaw has in his "Protest" alluded to this confederacy—this tri-partite alliance, and thus brings forward an error held by the same persons* that have espoused the non-backsliding doctrine.

"We hasten to the second part of our subject; namely, *That the Lord does not chastise his children for sin.* Now, I have said, in the former part of this discourse, that there is no principle promulgated, be it ever so contrary to the scope of God's word, but its advocates find some ground upon which they profess to base it. Thus they who advocate the doctrine of non-chastisement for sin tell us, that the Lord has no rod to chastise them with, all the sins and iniquities of his people having been laid upon Christ, who has put all our sins away by the sacrifice of himself, made an end of them, so that when they are sought for they cannot be found; and that, as Christ has endured the curse of the law due to our sins, having been made a curse for us, and drunk up even the very dregs of penal wrath, we therefore stand complete and accepted in him, all our scarlet and crimson sins washed away in his blood, and our souls clothed in his perfect robe of righteousness.

"Then it may be asked, 'Are you going to agree with the advocates of non-chastisement?' By no means. I shall introduce my views upon this subject by drawing your attention to what is said in the word of God respecting it; and I cannot do this better than by naming what took place many years ago. At that time I went to supply a destitute people in Yorkshire. I got there on the Saturday night, and several of the friends came to see me at the deacon's house with whom I was then staying. I soon found that they had been debating among themselves, and had become a little cross one with another. A minister had been supplying for them, who preached from Numbers xxiii. 21: "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel; the Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them." From their conversation, I found the minister had preached well, setting forth the union between Christ and his people, proving from the word of God that as the church stood in Christ, God could not see any sin in her, but that she was all fair, and without spot or blemish. Some of the friends contended that the Lord did see sin in his people, and that he chastised them for it too. Thus the argument was renewed in my presence. At length my opinion was appealed to. I said, 'Both parties are right, though there is an apparent contradiction. As the church stands in Christ before a holy, just, and righteous God in his law, she stands as free from sin as Christ, and as white as snow, without spot, wrinkle, or stain of sin, the church being complete and accepted in the Beloved. But mark well, there is another relationship that we stand in to our covenant God and Father. We are his adopted children, and he hath sent forth the Spirit

*We understand that the Church at Manchester lately under Mr. Bidder's pastoral care has publicly disavowed the doctrines against which Mr. Kershaw's "Protest" is directed. As we have not in the slightest degree interfered with the personal part of the question, but treated the whole subject on general grounds, this disavowal does not in the least affect what we have written in this and our preceding Numbers. The question with us from the first has been, Are these views widely diffused? Are they spreading? Are they unscriptural and pernicious? As such, are we right in opposing them? As we have reason to believe these questions must be answered in the affirmative, we have felt justified in devoting to the subject so much space and attention.

of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. As our heavenly Father, he hath given his children many precepts and exhortations which it is both our duty and privilege to obey, from a principle of love to him for the great things he hath done for our souls. He watches over us in love and with an observing eye, and is well-pleased with our obedience to his commands, precepts, and exhortations, and he is displeased with our disobedience, and assuredly will chastise us for it."

How plainly does the doctrine of non-chastisement flow from the doctrine of non-backsliding! Let us trace the connexion. A child of God cannot backslide; therefore he cannot sin; therefore God cannot punish him for sin. Or take it in another way. Sin is a nonentity—in other words, has no existence; there is then no such thing in a child of God as sin. How then can God chastise, when there is nothing to be chastised for?

If there be any of our readers who have imbibed, or are secretly inclined to the doctrine that Christ has so put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, that it has now no existence, will they listen for a few moments whilst we put matters to their own conscience? "Commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God;" (2 Cor. iv. 2;) and therefore to yours also.

Say, then, you are a child of God, a true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Can you, or can you not, do and say things displeasing to God? Is unbelief a sin, is pride a sin, is lust a sin, is evil temper a sin, is covetousness a sin? Is a hard heart, a roving imagination, a worldly spirit, a light trifling disposition sinful? Have you no blasphemous thoughts, no wanderings in prayer, no murmuring, peevishness, and fretfulness of mind? Are these things right, or wrong? are they pleasing to God, or displeasing to him? are they approved, or are they condemned, by God's word? Do not resist the testimony of your own conscience, and say there is no such thing as sin, when it is working in you every moment. Do you never feel inward checks and reproofs when you have said or done anything manifestly wrong? Is not this an internal evidence that your experience refutes your doctrine? And is it not a very dangerous thing to slight and neglect, perhaps withstand, these remonstrances of conscience? You may slight conscience till, like a clock, it may strike without being heard or heeded. And this may terminate in a seared conscience, and you may perish in your own deceivings.

But if any are already so hardened through the deceitfulness of sin as to resist all this inward testimony, to them we use different language. You may say that you cannot or do not sin. You may deceive yourself by such speeches, but you cannot deceive others. Why, if you cannot see it in yourself, they can see it in you. It looks out of your eyes, it gushes out of your mouth, it drops from your hands, it bursts forth, like Uzziah's leprosy, in your forehead. The ostrich may bury its head in the sand, and think its body a nonentity; but it painfully learns its mistake when the arrow of the hunter pierces it through and through. And O

beware, ye that say sin is a nonentity, lest the arrows of divine wrath here or hereafter pierce you in body and soul

Mr. Kershaw, who throughout his discourse draws all his arguments from the word of God, thus meets the doctrine of non-chastisement:—

“David was a man of God, born and taught of him; but in an unguarded hour, through the power and under the temptations of Satan, he fell awfully and grievously into sin, when he committed adultery with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite, and, to cover his sin, gave orders unto Joab to set him in the front of the battle, that he might be slain with the sword of the children of Ammon. The awful and foul fall of David is left upon record, not to encourage us to sin that grace may abound, but rather as a beacon on a hill, to deter us from lusting after evil things as he did. The eyes of the Lord, as a Father, however, were upon his child David in this matter. Though he loved him as one of his people in Christ Jesus his covenant Head, he did not love his sin; as it is written, ‘But the thing that David did displeased the Lord.’ As a Father, he was displeased with the unbecoming conduct of his son. He therefore sent Nathan the prophet to him. But you shall have David’s own words. Turn your attention to the 89th Psalm: ‘His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.’ He will do it in fatherly love and mercy. And, for ever blessed be his holy name! it is a mercy that he does not cast his backsliding children off. But he says, ‘Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail; my covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David.’”

“The Lord made good the word spoken by his servant Nathan. Evil was continually rising up in his own family. Amnon casts a lustful eye upon his sister Tamar. Absalom, enraged at the conduct of Amnon, is determined to be revenged, and slays him. Absalom rises in rebellion against his own father, and, guided by Ahitophel, David’s most intimate friend and counsellor, steals away the hearts of the people, so that David had to flee for his life. Oh, the sorrows, sighs, and groans, that his poor soul had to pass through from the time of his fall to the day of his death! But, though the Lord visited his transgressions with his fatherly rod, he did not take away his loving-kindness from him, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail, but was his God and guide even unto death. In his last moments he was enabled to say, by precious faith, ‘Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.’

“Now, my dear friends, does not the case of David prove to a demonstration the falsity of the doctrine that the Lord does not chastise his people for sin? The Lord says, ‘As many as I love I rebuke and chasten.’ ‘Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Lord.’

“‘Bastards may escape the rod,
Sunk in earthly, vain delight;
But the true-born child of God
Must not, would not, if he might.’”

As divine chastisement for sin is an important subject, and we wish to offer a few thoughts upon it, we must claim the indulgence of deferring them to our next Number.

(To be continued.)

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

No sin can be little, because it is committed against the great God of heaven and earth. To commit little sins, the sinner must find out a little God.—*Bunyan*.

It is a good sign when the Lord blows off the blossoms of our forward hopes in this life, and lops the branches of our worldly joys to the very root, on purpose that they should not thrive.—*Rutherford*.

As Jonah's gourd withered in the morning, when he hoped for most benefit by it against the ensuing heat of the day, so the blessings of this world frequently wither when we expect to find most freshness in them, and to receive most nourishment from them.—*Arrowsmith*.

Ye that go to the Father, and think to set yourselves in his presence, and stand as the objects of his delight, on the footing of your own righteousness, shame and confusion of face will cover you before you are aware. Paul durst not be found in it, but looked upon it as dung; and dung, you know, is offensive in itself and unable to support the man that stands upon it.—*Crisp*.

After great manifestations of God's love, it is usual for the temper to be unusually busy. So weak is the constitution of grace below, that we cannot of ourselves bear either the smiles or the frowns of God, without some degree of danger. If God smile, and open himself familiarly to us, then we are prone to grow high and wanton; if he frown, then faith sinks and hope sickens. Thus exalted manifestations, like bright weather and warm air, are followed by the weeds of corruption; and the other, like a sharp, intense frost, nips and almost kills the flowers of joy, peace, and comfort.

POETRY.

THE BELIEVER'S CONFLICT.

Day after day my soul complains;
 My bed's a witness to my grief;
 I'm bound in strong and heavy chains
 Of murmuring and unbelief.

Temptation's angry waves arise,
 And frowning dash against my breast;
 My trembling heart within me dies;
 I'm toss'd about, and find no rest.

How can a helpless worm withstand
 Such fierce relentless foes as these?
 O Lord, reveal thy helping hand;
 To thee for help thy servant flees.

Hide not thy face in this distress,
 But on me condescend to shine;
 Let me again enjoy thy grace,
 And bid me boldly call thee mine.

Old Magazine.

THE

GOSPEL STANDARD.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”—Matt. v. 6.

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”—2 Tim. i. 9.

“The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.”—Rom. xi. 7.

“If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”—Acts vii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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GOD FAITHFUL TO HIS PROMISES; BEING OUR
ONLY REFUGE IN DARK AND TRYING TIMES, OR
IN AFFLICTIVE PROVIDENCES.

BY JOHN RUSK.

(Continued from page 207.)

5. Another branch of “doing good” is, to communicate of what we receive: “Freely ye have received, freely give.” And this I shall consider in a two-fold point of light: 1. temporally, and 2. spiritually.

1. *Temporally.* To men in general it is right, if God has blessed them in providence, to assist others. Christ showed a blessed example of this. He went about doing good. But more particularly to the family of God, for they are nearer to us than any relations or worldly friends. I must acknowledge I have been very backward here, to my shame be it spoken. Though I never had much to be liberal with, yet I have been much grieved on seeing others so liberal, generous, and free; and have envied them, and wished to be like them. But I know there is a power required here as much as anywhere; which power I have at times felt, and wish I could find more of it. However, I am sure of this, it is greatly out (the root of it) in me, and it is my prayer that it may be more so. “Bless God!” you say, “I am clear here, for I was always liberal.” So you may, and yet God hate you for your liberality. Say you, “Why?” I answer you from his own word. He does not contradict what those on his left-hand say of their good performances, but tells them “they had not done it to the least of his brethren;” which shows it must not spring from their being of the same profession, or judgment,

but their being least in their own eyes; and this shows they bear the image of Christ, who calls himself "a worm and no man," and "made himself of no reputation." Now, a cup of cold water, that in our account is of no worth, to such shall not lose its reward; but he says to all others, "Depart, ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you;" which I think is no better than this text: "The covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth."

Now, real liberality must spring from this and nothing else, according to the Scriptures of truth, which cannot be broken. The Corinthians were eminent for this grace; and it springs from the grace of God, and differs much from the other, for the world loves its own. Sinners love sinners, and sinners give to sinners; but this is grace, which a worldly man knows nothing about. Now, this is good: "To do good and communicate, forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well-pleased;" "Do good to all men, but especially to the household of faith." And remember, it must not be done grudgingly. God loves a cheerful giver. God grant us more of that real love to the brethren! "For whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother in need, and shutteth up the bowels of his compassion towards him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" You must remember, our love must be "in deed and in truth."

2. Another part of this communicating is *spiritual*. Now, when we have been in some heavy trial, and long prayed, cried, and groaned to God, and he is pleased to appear, he expects us to communicate it to others, to encourage them to persevere in calling on him in the same way. What says David? "Come unto me, all ye that fear the Lord, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul."

Again. In reading his word, if we find it suitable to our case, and he attends it with power, this should be told to others, to encourage them to search the Scriptures. The same in hearing. When the word comes with divine power, in the Holy Ghost and with much assurance, this should be told. For he has promised to create the fruit of the lip, and declares this living water shall spring up unto everlasting life. And these things must be told in a way to secure all the glory to God, to whom alone it is due.

Again. If I meet with one that is staggering at the promise, God tells me to "strengthen the weak hands;" not that it is in my power of myself; but as I was in this case once, I am to tell them what power unbelief once had over me, and how God appeared for me when I never expected it, and fulfilled in me the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power. And to tell you the truth, I dearly love the company of such, and have found my heart very open to them, and glad to answer, as far as the Lord has helped me, their honest questions; and with this I have been at home with God's family, and often found my soul in tune, which has displeased some that have been acquainted with me, saying, I was full of self; but I leave it with God, who searches the heart and tries the reins.

Now, this is what I understand by communicating to others; and you will find at this work your path will shine more and more. We are told that "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another." And is this all? No. If reproof or rebuke is needed, you are to give it: "Faithful are the wounds of a friend." And though it will touch their consequence at first, yet they will love you more afterwards, knowing that you sought not theirs, but them; and you will find more favour than he that flattereth with his lips. What says David? "Let the righteous smite me, (how was it done?) Why, Nathan says, "Thou art the man,") and let him reprove me; it is an excellent oil, that shall not break my head." Pray for them in secret, but withstand them, if they are wrong, to the face; but in the spirit of meekness, considering yourself in the body.

Lastly on this head. It is right to communicate what God has done for us to the instrument that has been of use to us, to encourage him in the work; as Paul says, "Ye are my crown, and my joy and rejoicing in the Lord." This is communicating spiritually, and this is doing good, for "a good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good." "Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

6. Another good thing is, *subjection to the higher powers*. You may talk of the obedience of faith as long as you like, but if you live and die an enemy to the civil power, it is plain that, so dying, you cannot be saved. Take God's word for what I advance: "Presumptuous are they and self-willed; they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." Again. "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for he that resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive unto themselves damnation." "Put them in mind that they be subject to principalities and powers." But say you, "It is the hard times we live in, and the tender pity I have for the poor, that stir me up." Your tender pity is like Judas's, when he said, "Might not this ointment have been sold for five hundred pence, and given to the poor?" Ah! Judas, you have some feeling for your fellow creatures; yet this was but a cloke for his villany: "Not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief." And just so is it with you. It is your cursed pride that you can not submit to the powers that God has set up; and as for your pity to the poor, "such tender mercies are cruel," and at the bottom but varnished over with a pretended love to the poor. If you are obedient to one part of God's word why not to another? Now, this is a faithful warning, and may God fix it on your heart. Remember, he that despises the word shall be destroyed; but, on the other hand, God will dwell with that man that trembles at His word. David would never touch Saul, though so great an enemy to him. Why? Because he was the Lord's anointed. Now, to be in subjection to them is good, as Paul says in the next verse after enforcing it, "Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same."

7. Another thing that is good is, *to pray for all mankind*. But I think there is a restriction, and I know of but one, and that is the sin unto death. John says, "There is a sin unto death;" then these were not to be prayed for. And when we consider what we once were, and that grace alone makes us to differ, we may with humble submission to the will of God pray him to turn their hearts; as it is He, and he only, that knows who are his and who are not. And not only all men are we to pray for, but our government, and all that bear rule over us; not to make a great noise about it in a public meeting, as we know is often the case, but in private, having the protection of the gospel chiefly in view. Now, this is good, and so you read: "I exhort that prayers and supplications be made for all men, for kings and all in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty;" "for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour."

8. Another thing that is good is this, namely, *the more a person injures us, by the help of God to do them all the kindness we can*. Say you, "That goes against the grain." I know it does; and, nothing but the grace of God in exercise will help us to do it. But for one moment look back. What were we ourselves? Why, "hateful and hating one another." And suppose God had taken them and left us; has he not a right to do as he will with his own? Our natures are the same to this day; and to think that he should choose us and leave them! O! this is wonderful! "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Again. He says that vengeance is his, and he will repay. Therefore, "if thine enemy hunger, feed him; and if he thirst, give him drink." "And in this we take pattern by God himself, for he loves the stranger in giving him food and raiment; and Christ loved his enemies: and therefore, says Paul, "be not overcome with evil; but overcome evil with good." "Trust in the Lord, and do good."

9. It is good *to be engaged in the Christian warfare*, which will come from various quarters to us. And this is called faith's fighting; and we are to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. And if you have genuine faith, you will be engaged in this warfare, and will be a good soldier of Jesus Christ. But real faith will do these ten things for you:

1. It will deal with the blood of Christ, and purge your conscience. "God purifies the heart by faith."

2. It will lay hold of the righteousness of Christ; for it is unto all, and upon all that believe.

3. It will overcome the world; "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith;" but it is by laying hold of Christ, for he overcomes the world.

4. It will bring in the promises of God to the conscience when much needed: "By faith they obtained the promises."

5. It will mix with the word when preached, not always to comfort, as you hear hypocrites talk, but to apply reproof also, or

rebuke, if we stand in need of it; and thus the word will profit us when mixed with faith.

6. The Spirit's witness will attend real faith: "He that believes hath the witness in himself;" so says John.

7. It will attend your petitions at a throne of grace: "This is the confidence we have in him, that if we ask anything agreeable to his will he heareth us." Now, have you prevailed with God in prayer?

8. If you have real faith, you will esteem Christ as the Chief among ten thousand, and the Altogether Lovely. Peter says, "Unto you that believe he is precious;" and what is precious we set great store by. Paul tells you he had the spirit of faith, and was ready to die at Jerusalem for the sake of the Lord Jesus.

9. Real faith will, under the Spirit's influence, claim God as your Father: "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father!" But it is faith that proves our adoption: "For we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." This was plainly to be seen in the prodigal: "I will arise and go to my Father." And God said, "This my son was lost and is found."

10. Faith will lay hold on the love of God, and cast out all slavish fear and torment. "We," says John, "have believed the love he hath towards us." I think you may know by these signs, whether you have real faith or not.

Now, seeing we have taken notice of the fruits and effects of faith, let us make a few remarks on faith's fight, or this warfare. Then, it is a sweet thing to feel the heart purified by faith; but if this was done but once, though never so conspicuously, we should soon forget it; but in order to keep Christ high in our esteem, the Blessed Spirit leads us again and again into deeper discoveries of the filthiness and abominations of our wicked hearts; and it is faith's work to fight through all this corruption, till it lays hold of Christ Jesus as a fountain opened to cleanse us from all sin. And this is a sharp trial, and the Christian warfare.

Again. We shall often find ourselves in many things condemned. Nothing can condemn us as considered in Christ Jesus. No: but it was intended that we should not forget our base original; and when we find peace come again and again, by our faith laying hold of Christ's righteousness, this keeps Christ and us in union together. But the difficulty lies in faith's working its way through all this condemnation.

Again. It is a truth, that faith will overcome the world; but not without fighting again and again; and very often in our feelings we shall be very nearly overcome by it, and so near that we shall expect to turn our backs on the cause of God, and go into the world altogether. Now, if you know nothing of faith's fighting, you may boast as much as you please, but you know nothing of faith's victory. That king walks boldly against whom there is no rising up; but this is not the faith of God's elect. Moreover; though faith will obtain the promises, yet not so easily as you imagine. I have heard

of people that have had numbers of texts of Scripture occur to their minds, which may often be the case, yet be nothing but a being well read in, or well acquainted with the Scriptures; but all this you may have, and never have one promise applied to your heart by the Holy Ghost. Besides, as Satan reigns and rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience, he can draw his own family into a profession, and where the truth is preached also, like the foolish virgins, to keep company with the wise, and make them presume by taking promises to themselves both from the preacher's mouth, and from the bare letter of Scripture also. And this is called untimely fruit.

But, on the other hand, if you get a promise you shall first long feel your need of that promise; it shall not be a light thing to have a promise from the living God, but weighty, well-timed, when sorely needed, and after much importunity. Striving and struggling to enter in at the strait gate, your heart and flesh will fail; your eyes also will fail with looking up to God: "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? will he be favourable no more? is his mercy clean gone for ever?" And you must not wonder at it, or think it does not come from God, because it does not come with a passage of Scripture to your mind; this is not to discourage you. But look into your conscience, and see what is done there. Is your grief assuaged? Then he has spoken a word in due season to your heart. Is your hope encouraged? The Lord is the hope of his people. Are you enabled to leave a part of your cares and burdens with the Lord, and feel yourself propped up? It is he who sustains you. Do you feel yourself a little stronger? He has promised to increase our strength. Do you find a full deliverance? The promise is, "I will deliver thee." But do not mind any passage of Scripture coming to your mind unless it do something in your conscience; and if something be done for you without a text coming, you have got the substance of the word, and that is the chief thing. Do not mistake me. I know God does sometimes apply a text of Scripture with power to the heart, but I think in general it is the other way. Thus, faith fights both to lay hold and keep its hold of the promises of God.

Again. Faith will mix with the word when preached, and apply sometimes the threatenings of God's word, so that you tremble and expect to be cut off, not only under first convictions, but again and again, so that you will think there is but a step between you and death. And it is intended to search you and try you, that you may be more brought out of self; be made more evangelical, more savory and unctuous. And this is faith's fight, to lay hold of the comforting part of God's word. But before you get here you will again and again think God is going to expose you as a hypocrite before all the congregation. If you ask how I know all this, I say, I have been here myself.

Again. The Spirit's witness will attend faith, but not at all times. Sometimes you will feel yourself sadly accused for living below your privileges; for being so light, so trifling, so worldly, so

dead; for leaving your first-love, for slighting the children of God, for hearing the word preached with such indifference, or wishing it over: for neglecting prayer and the reading of the word of God, and indulging your besetting sins. Conscience will often accuse you here; and as you have broken the hedge, the serpent will bite, that is the devil; he will accuse; he is called the "accuser of the brethren." Now, his accusations are often false. He is said to accuse us night and day. By night, I understand when we are in much darkness, and see not our signs. "Now," says Satan, "God will give you up to black despair, for you are a hypocrite." And this is often credited by us. By day, I understand when the light shines on our path, and when by His light we walk through darkness.

Now, very shortly we find Satan trying to accuse us of presumption, and endeavouring to persuade us that our joy is the joy of the wayside hearer. This is accusing us night and day, and we are often much afraid of him. But we are told "not to be afraid of sudden fear" or evil tidings.

A legal spirit will accuse us sometimes for mere dead works, which has a broken law for its object: "Ye have one that accuses you, even Moses, in whom ye trust." Yes; and we are prone to look that way, and Satan will suggest that we are Antinomians, and that it is not the right path to look to Jesus for all; for, quoth he, this leads to a loose way of living. But what is faith about all this time? Why, it is labouring through all these accusations to lay hold of the Spirit's witness to stop their mouths. This is faith's fighting, or the Christian warfare.

Again. You have often heard people say, when others have told them of their troubles, "You should make it a matter of prayer." Very good advice; but prayer is not such an easy plaything as many people suppose. Let us ask Jeremiah. Pray, Jeremiah, do you always find God a God hearing and answering prayer? No; for "when I cry and shout he shutteth out my prayer." It is very easy for people that are at ease in Zion to talk of a matter for prayer; but a real saint that is instructed with a strong hand, tried in spirit sharply, and tried long in Providence, finds it hard work to pray, and often cannot utter a word to his satisfaction, were it to save his soul, but only groans and sighs, thinking God will never appear any more. This is faith's fighting, to bring an answer from God; and glad enough is such a one when he can pour out his soul to God, and show him all his trouble. Nevertheless, faith shall be honoured of God, and in time we shall say with David, "Verily, God hath heard my prayer;" and "I love the Lord because he hath heard the voice of my supplication, and inclined his ear unto me."

Again. Though faith can see such a beauty in Christ Jesus, that we are so taken with his finished work, and can say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his," yet this is not always the case, for we often find our hearts divided. Solomon little thought his heart would be so taken up with his many strange wives. Now, this tries our faith.

for at such times the Lord does not appear so precious. But when we have been provoked to jealousy, which stirs us up; when we see others rejoicing in Christ Jesus and speaking of his worth, and formerly we in these things used to carry the sway, this touches us close, and we cannot rest till we get back to our first Husband, knowing it was better with us then. Let faith alone, and she will work her way to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is her Author and will be her Finisher; hence it is called the faith of Christ. But this is hard and bitter work to a soul that is much indulged; and this I knew a few years back to my sorrow. Still, I found, though I little expected it, faith work its way. This is the warfare.

Again. People that the devil has full possession of, like the Scribes and Pharisees, may say, "We have one Father, even God:" or they may say as many do, "Our Father, which art in heaven;" but let God by his Spirit shine into their hearts, to discover and lay the wickedness of their hearts open, and they dare not do so; no, nor yet sing any part of a hymn that is positive. I have been now seeking after God near twenty years, and five or six years at times I have, when my heart has been warm, been enabled to lay this claim, and my conscience says the same. I say it is about five or six years ago, but I find it the hardest thing to stedfastly hold fast; neither can I at all times approach God in prayer with those words. No; there is that awe and reverence of God, his holiness and terrible majesty, that unless we are emboldened to say so under the comforting influence of the Blessed Spirit, we are not so very ready; and yet, if you were to ask me if God was my Father, I think with humility I should say, Yes. Now, this is one of faith's highest attainments: and faith will work through all opposition, till it lays hold of God the Father. "Why," say you, "Christ told the Pharisees that if God was their Father they would love him; and if I love Christ, does not that prove that God is my Father?" Yes; this is all very well while we enjoy it, but your faith must be tried to the uttermost, to show you what it will wade through. It is one thing to talk of faith, and another thing to be engaged in the fight of faith.

I have at times, under very sharp trials, been enabled to claim God as my Father; but then it was when a light shone on my path, when I believed it was working for my good, when I found a cleaving to the Lord, and a submission in some degree took place. But this is seldom. However, the Scriptures bear it out, for the prodigal laid that claim before he kissed his father, before he put on the robe, the ring, and the shoes were put on him, or before he feasted on the fatted calf; and that he did not presume is plain, because his father received him.

Another difficult work of faith is, as Mr. Huntington says, to hold fast the everlasting love of God to us; that is, that he never varies in his love to us; that he never loves us more at one time than another; that it is an eternal love—never had a beginning, and never will have an end. I say, if you can, under all backslidings, misgivings of heart, trials, temptations, bodily

afflictions, and cross providences, hold this fast, and never in the least deviate from it, you have a stronger faith than I have. However, it would be good so to do, and therefore may the Lord increase the little faith he has been pleased to favour us with, that we may be strong in it, giving glory to his name!

Now, faith will work through all these things, and fight its way to hold fast the everlasting love of God our heavenly Father. These are a few of the many things we have to cope with in our Christian warfare.

Moreover, we shall have to cope with worldly men, for the wrath of Satan in them will rise against the love and zeal that we shall find at times for Christ. "If," says David, "the Lord had not been on our side when men rose up against us, then had they swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us." This is the fire of hell working in them. And we have also another fire, which comes from heaven, for says John the Baptist, "He (that is, Christ) shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Then the battle begins, as Isaiah says, "This battle shall be with burning (zeal and love) and with fuel (dry or corrupt trees) of fire." And what is the cause? Why, "unto us a child is born;" that is the cause, and nothing else. "Christ in us the Hope of Glory," as Paul says. "God revealed his Son in me."

But not to enlarge here, the next sort of enemies are enlightened professors without the power of religion, which creep in. They do not come into God's church like righteous men: "The righteous are bold as a lion." But these are creepers, working on your natural affections. And what do they want? Why, to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage. They will agree with all we say for a time, and when they have got a good hold, or of some note, then the infernal leaven begins to work: "We took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in company." But how was it after, David? Why, words softer than oil, smoother than butter, yet war at the bottom, and his words drawn swords. This was Ahitophel; he was one of the creepers. David felt it a burden, and says the Lord sustained him under it. Now, we must more or less be engaged in this fight, this warfare.

And this is not all. Relations and friends, near in the ties of nature, these will rise up. "I am come," says Christ, "to set a man at variance with his own house: henceforth there shall be five in one house; three against two, and two against three; and a man's foes are those of his own house." And the more you have of God, the more will this go on, and try you not a little. Losses and crosses are severely felt by many for the love they bear to the despised Nazarene. Masters over servants will show their authority, and husbands over wives; and this may go on for many years. But he that endures to the end the same shall be saved. Satan with his fiery darts and blasphemous suggestions, with every scheme he is master of, working also with all his allies, will war with the saints. Yet, after all, we may say, as good Hezekiah said on another occasion, "With them is an arm of flesh, but with us

is the Lord our God to help." Now, this is called good; I say this warfare is called good. Hear what the Holy Ghost says by Paul: "Fight the good fight of faith." Thus, it is good to be fighting. "Trust, then, in the Lord, and do good." Keep on in this warfare.

(To be concluded in our next.)

EVERY HEART KNOWETH ITS OWN BITTERNESS,
AND A STRANGER INTERMEDDLETH NOT WITH
ITS JOY.

My dear aged Brother in Christ,—The tender mercies of our ever-loving and gracious covenant God be thy comfort, and his life-giving presence thy everlasting portion!

Beloved, out of the abundance of my heart, contracted though I feel it oft to be, I desire again to address you.

A considerable time has now elapsed since we heard from you; and as our redemption is every day and hour drawing nearer and nearer, a desire which I could not resist sprang up in my breast this morning to write to you, to know how it is with you, and to tell you a little how it is with me.

It is meet, my dear brother, to be often stirring each other up in remembrance, as we are so prone to forget those things which we should remember, and keep in remembrance those things which we should forget.

There is nothing on this side endless misery that can equal the deceitfulness, or go beyond the depths of sin which I feel in my heart; but the reigning power of divine grace is within, which keeps it under. And I dare speak for you, that your heart is quite as bad as mine—worse it cannot be. "Every heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not with its joy." We each know our own heart's bitterness, and are not strangers to the joys prepared for suffering saints. Blessed be God for that! The bitterness of heart which I feel, is because I cannot cease from sin, and because my sin so often separates between me and my God, my dear Lord Jesus. O! my dear friend, I do feel it to be a most heart-rending thing to be thrust at a distance from Him whom my soul loveth, whose glories I have seen by faith, whose blood I have felt in my conscience, and with whom I have been blessed to hold divine communion below, and to esteem it a million times more sweet than life itself. A stranger to the new birth knows nothing of this bitterness, nor of these joys. It is an easy thing to say, "Ye must be born again;" but who can tell except those who have felt it, how hard it is to be held up in life only as though by the hair of our heads, in the midst of Zion's furnace; as dying every moment, and behold we live? Let the quickened family of God answer me if I am right.

Would I know what sin has done, I must behold a suffering Jesus bearing the curse in his people's room and stead. Would I feel comfort in thus looking on Him whom my sins have pierced, I

must know by God's own witness felt within, that He died for me. Would I have "a sure word of prophecy" to depend upon and "to take heed unto," and be sealed to the day of redemption, I must feel God the Spirit bringing home his own word with power into my heart, and leaving the sweet impressions of everlasting love and atoning blood thereon. Would I reign with Christ above, I must have grace given me to love, serve, obey, and glorify Him while here below; or my hope will be in vain. And lastly, would I not be deceived in these things, I must be brought, a law-condemned, a sin-condemned, and self-condemned, and a feelingly lost perishing sinner, to Christ for salvation, made willing to accept of it on his own terms,—all of grace and not of works, be favoured to receive his salvation into my heart, and give all diligence to make my calling and election sure.

This is God's standard for the saints to try the spirits by, his own word in the hands of the Spirit. By this standard he has tried me; by this standard I have tried myself. The effect thereof is this: My soul with sorrow and joy of heart now appeals to God, and cries with dear Peter of old, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee," and would live and die in thy cause, a witness for thee, to thine endless honour, to the wonder of men and angels, and to my soul's comfort and joy for ever. This is the climax of my desires. God, who will search Jerusalem with candles, and ere long will arise to purge his floor, knows that I lie not.

My "sorrow" is, to see and feel how short I come of God's revealed will. Still my soul can truly say, with David, "How I love thy precepts!" "Thy commandments are my delight;" "I meditate in thy word;" "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." And when opened up, unsealed, unfolded, and revealed to me by God the Holy Ghost, it yields me comforts divine within, the consolations of the Spirit, light and life, peace and joy; and then my soul re-echoes his worthy praise, and cries, "The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver; yea, nothing under heaven can once be compared thereto."

And my "joy" is, to look within my heart, and prove that my feelings are so far in accordance with God's word and will, and the "certain gospel sound" therein, as to give me great encouragement still to hope in his mercy, and to rest assured that he will carry on his own work in my soul, and consummate it in eternal glory at last. The thought often lays me weeping in the dust at Jesus' feet, and makes me willing to be anything God pleases, or nothing, so that a precious Christ may be glorified thereby: to be favoured while here, and above to be where Jesus is, to behold his glory, to commune with him, and to praise and bless his dear worthy name for ever and ever.

It is written, "Ye must be born again." Feeling, and handling, and tasting are true signs of life within; and my soul cannot rest without tasting, handling, and feeling the good word of life.

Therefore do I hope I am born again, born of the Spirit. "He shall convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." My conscience is convinced of the same with a witness. "Sin" I feel in my members, bringing me into captivity to the law of sin and death; so that, with Paul, I am often crying out, in the bitterness of my soul and the anguish of my spirit, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The "righteousness" of God in punishing Christ on the behalf and in the room and stead of his people, for the sins of his elect, his chosen, his beloved bride; and punishing the non-elect for ever in their own persons, as they stand in Adam their natural head, according to their works. The "righteousness" of Christ, that it is really imputed to me, because I feel justified therein by faith, and enjoy the peace of God, the sure and blessed effects thereof, within my soul. And "judgment;" his justifying me in time past, bringing me in guilty at his bar, condemning, and pardoning, and acquitting me, and giving me his divine mark of sonship within.

O what an unmerited, distinguishing favour! My soul weeps at the mercy I have found. I am now waiting to be openly acknowledged by him before men and angels at the last great tribunal day, the "judgment" to come, when Christ shall descend with a shout and the trump of God; his whole elect saints, who shall rise first, and angels with him, to judge the non-elect at the judgment of the great day, which is the judgment to come, and which I am convinced will take place.

It is also written, "There is no other name given amongst men whereby we can or must be saved," but Christ crucified. My soul does bless the Lord indeed that there is not, for I feel so well satisfied to be saved by him alone, that I am sure I do not want any other.

*"So satisfied with Christ to save,
With him I'll death itself outbrave,
And rest my all on his dear blood,
Nor fear e'en hell or Jordan's flood.*

*My soul rejoices at the sound,
And hopes in Jesus to be found;
My heart now melts with joy and love,
And longs to reign with him above.*

*Dear name! the name I love to plead,
I've proved my Christ a friend indeed;
And crave for power and grace to show
The debt of love to him I owe."*

It is recorded, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me (Christ) ye shall have peace." The peace of God enjoyed in the soul fits the back for every burden, and is the only thing that can effectually and sweetly make a proud, rebellious, haughty sinner bend to God's will, and submit and be resigned to divine sovereignty. When the influence of divine grace is withdrawn but for a moment, my flesh dislikes the sound "tribulation," and shrinks, and frets, and rebels, and murmurs beneath the rod, and cannot submit to the solemn word; but as soon as Jesus again

appears, and whispers in my breast, "It is I, be not afraid;" "Thy sins which are many are all forgiven thee;" then all is right, and all my flesh, and body, and soul, and powers are so completely overcome, that I feel as if I could weep, and submit to anything that is God's will, and sing myself away to everlasting bliss.

Again. I am assured that it is "through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom." In vain my flesh seeks for a smoother path, for no smoother path can be found. But the word "*must* enter the kingdom" being engraved deep on my heart by the finger of Immutable Love sweetens all, bends my will to God's will, and makes me with sweet resignation press forward still, more and more desiring "to lay aside every weight (which are many) and the sin which doth so easily beset me," which is unbelief: and with dear Paul, "if so be I by any means may attain." Then methinks, when once I have got beyond the gunshot of sin and Satan, I shall soon be more than a million times repaid for every groan I have uttered, every pain I have felt, and every trouble and sorrow I have endured in the wilderness, and I shall be right well satisfied in the unveiled presence of my Lord for ever.

And lastly, to add no more, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." This is the mark whereby it is known to others that we love the Lord Jesus; but all who keep his commandments before men do not love him. The love of God and Christ enjoyed, known, and felt within, is a secret known only to very few; and is the "more excellent way" that Paul speaks of as the mainspring of action in every quickened soul, and the turning point between a believer and an unbeliever. There is not a single word or action that can be acceptable to God but what springs therefrom. Let not this wound one of the Lord's dear little ones. Every groan they heave because of the workings of sin within proves there is a holy opposing principle of grace within their hearts, which God himself has implanted there; which hates sin, and directs their mournful souls to Jesus and his blood for help, salvation, and cure; and makes their groaning, and sighing, and crying arise with acceptance, as well pleasing to the Lord. And every desire they have to be found in Christ, and to live to his honour and glory while here, in the enjoyment of his presence and great salvation below and above for ever, proves this mainspring, the love of Christ, is in their hearts. Although they dare not say they love him, they can say they desire to love him, to be with him, and to be free from sin; and this desire springs from love to Jesus, yea, is love itself; and as sure as God is in heaven, and I have felt any love to his dear name, the time will come when such desires shall be granted. Therefore let not any truly mourning soul be discouraged, but watch, and wait, and pray; for it is good they should do so, and wait for the salvation of God.

The commandments of God's law are to those that are under the law; but to them only the law commands, and curses for every disobedience. Not so the commandments of God in the gospel. To his people Christ says, to try their faith, and love, and sincerity,

"If ye love me, keep my commandments." Then he lets a little of his love into their hearts, with power to obey. Then they cry, "We love him because he first loved us."

O! my brother, how blessed it is to be thus brought from under the terrors of the law, to live and die and be thus constrained to obey beneath Christ's yoke, the gospel yoke! "It is good that a man should bear the yoke in his youth," yea, and in his old age too.

My dear friend, in the midst of our declining years, we both begin to feel the untold blessedness thereof. What should I do, now that I begin to look downward to the tomb, were I in such a careless, hardened, wretched state now as I once was? If I were, I could not extricate myself; but God, in the midst of deserved judgments, has remembered me in mercy, and shown mercy to me, that I might not be utterly expelled from him.

**"O for this love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break,
And every quicken'd sinner's tongue
The Saviour's praises speak."**

The fears of death do not now disturb my mind; atoning blood applied has removed the monster's sting from my conscience. My grief is now, as I named before, because I cannot cease from sin; because my sins separate between me and my God; and because I cannot live, and love, and serve, and glorify him as my soul desires. Vanity I see stamped on all below the sun. The Lord is very kind to me, and sweetens my morsel with his love; and my soul blesses his dear name for his mercies. "But these are not my God."

Sighs and groans are wearing away my dying body apace; nor would I alter it if I could, for I feel such a solemn sacred sweetness mingling with my mourning, that rather makes my mournings an inward pleasure to me than otherwise, as it is written: "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Therefore, to mourn over my sins and after Jesus suits me best; for at any time when my heart begins to grow careless and easy, so that I cannot mourn before the Lord with true contrition, and compunction, and brokenness of heart, I feel myself so restless and dissatisfied, that I cannot live till I am brought into a broken, humbled, mourning state again. For this cause my soul covets quiet and solitude, that I might groan out my life and desires to God, (unheard and unnoticed by mortals,) who heareth in secret, and rewards his wrestling Jacobs openly; for I cannot find many who can feel with and for me. Some of the younger branches of God's family are sometimes discouraged because they cannot use the language my letters contain, which wounds my heart and grieves my spirit; and to some of the older branches of Christ, my soul's report seems but as idle tales. Alas! alas! for the sleepy state of Zion. Nevertheless, the dear Lord hath given me, and doth still give me many, many tokens for good, which still bear me up, and strengthen my faith and hope in him still; and he will turn this to my good also.

Now, my dear brother, if these simple effusions of a worthless sinner's broken heart should be attended with divine savour to

your soul, it will be well, and you will know thereby that I have learned them not by the wisdom that man teacheth, but by the teachings of the Holy Ghost; and if they are made subservient to stir us both up to greater searchings of heart still, to provoke us to jealousy in these our latter days, for the honour of the Lord of Hosts, and to the real comfort of our sorrowful hearts, my desire in thus writing will be accomplished.

The God of all grace, love, and mercy go before us, and be around us as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, teaching us his whole will in Christ Jesus, and giving us grace to do his whole will, inspired by love divine; and be with us to bless us and comfort us and help us, till he has helped us over Jordan into his heavenly kingdom and glory, to see his face, and sing his praise, and sin no more; even as it is meet for me to think and believe this of him, and of you, my dear brother, and of myself also, that he will do so indeed, as sure as the earnest has been given.

The God of Israel be with you!

Yours affectionately in the Lord,

Bedworth, May 10th, 1848.

G. T. C.

A LETTER OF RUTHERFORD'S.

Much honoured and well-beloved in the Lord,—Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you!

Your letters give a dash to my laziness in writing. I must first tell you, there is not such a glassy, icy, and slippery piece of way betwixt you and heaven as youth. I have experience to say with me here, and feel what I assert. The old ashes of the sins of my youth are now fire of sorrow to me. I have seen the devil, as it were, dead and buried, and yet rise again, and be a worse devil than ever he was. Therefore, my brother, beware of a green young devil, that has never been buried. The devil in his blossoms (I mean the hot fiery lusts and passions of youth) is much to be feared. Better yoke with an old gray-haired, withered, dry devil; for in youth he findeth dry sticks, and dry coals, and a hot hearth-stone; and how soon can he with his flint strike fire, and with his bellows blow it up, and fire the house! Sanctified thoughts, thoughts made conscience of, and called in, and kept in awe, are green fuel that burn not, and are a water for Satan's coal. Yet I must tell you, the whole saints now triumphant in heaven, and standing before the throne, are nothing but Christ's forlorn and beggarly dyvours.¹ What are they but a pack of redeemed sinners? But their redemption is not only past the seals, but completed; and yours is on the wheels, and in doing. All Christ's good bairns² go to heaven with a broken brow, and with a crooked leg. Christ hath an advantage of you, and I pray you let him have it; he shall find employment for his calling in you. If it were not with you as

¹ Debtors, bankrupts.

² Children.

you write, grace should find no sale nor market in you. But ye must be content to give Christ somewhat ado: I am glad that he is employed that way. Let your bleeding soul and your sores be put into the hand of this expert Physician; let young and strong corruptions and his free grace be yoked together, and let Christ and your sins deal it betwixt them.

I should be loth to put you off your fears and your sense of deadness. I wish it were more. There are some wounds of that nature whose bleeding should not be soon stopped. You must take a house beside the Physician. It shall be a miracle if you be the first sick man he put away uncured, and worse than he found you. Nay, nay, Christ is honest, and, in that, flying¹ free with sinners: "And him that cometh to me I will in no case cast out." (John vi. 37.) Take ye that: it cannot be presumption to take that as your own, when ye find your wounds stound² you. Presumption is ever whole at the heart, and hath but the truant-sickness,³ and groaneth only for the fashion; faith hath sense of sickness, and looketh like a friend to the promises, and, looking to Christ therein, is glad to see a known face. Christ is as full a feast as ye can have to hunger. Nay, Christ, I say, is not a full man's leavings; his mercy sends always a letter of defiance to all your sins, if there were ten thousand of them. I grant you, it is a hard matter for a poor hungry man to win his meat upon hidden Christ; for then the key of his pantry-door, and of the house of wine, is a seeking, and cannot be had: but hunger must break through iron locks. I bemoan them not who can make a din, and all the fields ado, for a lost Saviour. You must let him hear it, so to say, upon both the sides of his head when he hideth himself; it is not time then to be bird-mouthed⁴ and patient.

Christ is rare indeed, and delicate to a sinner; he is a miracle and world's wonder to a seeking and a weeping sinner—but yet such a miracle as shall be seen by them who will come and see. The seeker and sigher is at last a singer and enjoyer; nay, I have seen a dumb man get alms from Christ. He that can tell his tale, and send such a letter to heaven as he hath sent to Aberdeen, it is very likely he will come speed⁵ with Christ; it bodeth⁶ God's mercy to complain heartily for sin. Let wrestling be with Christ till he says, "How is it, sir, that I cannot be quit of your bills, and your mislearned cries?" and then hope for Christ's blessing; and his blessing is better than other ten blessings. Think not shame because of your guiltiness. Necessity must not blush to beg. It standeth you hard to want Christ; and therefore that which idle on-waiting cannot do, misnurtured⁷ crying and knocking will do.

¹ Interchanging, communicative.

² Make you ache.

³ The feigned illness of a child unwilling to go to school.

⁴ Peeping and chirping like a little bird.

⁵ Soon meet with.

⁶ Forces.

⁷ Apparently rough and ill-bred, and therefore clamorous.

And for doubtings, because ye are not as ye were long since with your Master, consider three things:—

1. What if Christ had such tottering thoughts of the bargain of the new covenant betwixt you and him as you have?

2. Your heart is not the compass Christ saileth by. He will give you leave to sing as ye please, but he will not dance to your daft spring.¹ It is not referred to you and your thoughts what Christ will do with the charters betwixt you and him; your own misbelief hath torn them, but he hath the principal in heaven with himself. Your thoughts are no parts of the new covenant; dreams change not Christ.

3. Doubtings are your sins, but they are Christ's drugs and ingredients, that the Physician maketh use of for the curing of your pride. Is it not suitable for a beggar to say at meat, "God reward the winners?" for then he saith he knoweth who beareth the charge of the house. It is also meet ye should know by experience that faith is not nature's ill-gotten bastard, but your Lord's free gift, that lay in the womb of God's free grace; praised be the winner!

I may add a 4th. In the passing of your bill and your charters, when they went through the Mediator's great seal and were concluded, faith's advice was not sought; faith hath not a vote beside Christ's merits. Blood, blood, dear blood, that came from your Cautioner's holy body, maketh that sure work.

The use, then, which you have of faith now (having already closed with Jesus Christ for justification) is, to take out a copy of your pardon, and so you have peace with God upon the account of Christ; for since faith apprehendeth pardon, but never payeth a penny for it, no marvel that salvation doth not die and live, ebb or flow, with the working of faith. But because it is your Lord's honour to believe his mercy and his fidelity, it is infinite goodness in our Lord that misbelief giveth a dash to our Lord's glory, and not to our salvation. And so, whoever wants, (yea, howbeit God here bears with the want of what we are obliged to give him, even the glory of his grace, by believing,) yet a poor covenanted sinner wanteth not: but if guiltiness were removed, doubtings would find no friend nor life; and yet faith is to believe the removal of guiltiness in Christ.

A reason why we get less now (as you think) than before is; because at our first conversion our Lord putteth the meat in young bairns' mouths with his own hand. But when we grow to some further perfection we must "take heaven by violence," and take by violence from Christ what we get; and he can and doth hold, because he will have us to draw. Remember, now, you must live upon violent plucking. Laziness is a greater fault now than long since; we love always to have the pap put in our mouth.

Now, for myself. Alas! I am not the man I go for in this nation: men have not just weights to weigh me in. Oh, but I

¹ Foolish tune.

am a silly, feckless¹ body, and overgrown with weeds! Corruption is rank and fat in me. O! if I were answerable to this holy cause, and to that honourable Prince's love, for whom I now suffer—if Christ would refer the matter to me, (in his presence I speak it,) I might think shame to vote my own salvation. I think Christ might say, "Thinkest thou not shame to claim heaven, who dost so little for it?" I am very often so that I know not whether I sink or swim in the water. I find myself a bag of light froth. I would bear no weight, (but vanity and nothings weigh in Christ's balance,) if my Lord cast not in borrowed weight and metal, even Christ's righteousness, to weigh for me. The stock I have is not mine own; I am but the merchant that trafficks with other folks' goods. If my creditor, Christ, would take from me what he hath lent, I would not long keep the causey;² but Christ hath made it mine and his. I think it manhood to play the coward, and jouk³ in the lee-side of Christ; and thus I am not only "saved from my enemies," but I "obtain the victory." I am so empty, that I think it were an alms-deed in Christ if he would win a poor prisoner's blessing for evermore, and fill me with his love. I complain, when Christ cometh, he cometh always to fetch fire, he is ever in haste, he may not tarry; and poor I, a beggarly dyvour,⁴ get but a standing visit, and a standing kiss, and a standing "How dost thou?" in the bygoing.⁵ I dare not say he is lordly, because he is made a King now, at the right hand of God; or is grown miskenning⁶ and dry to his poor friends, for he cannot make more of his kisses than they are worth. But I think it my happiness to love the love of Christ; and, when he goeth away, the memory of his sweet presence is like a feast in a dear summer. I have comfort in this, that my soul desireth that every hour of my imprisonment were a company of heavenly tongues to praise him on my behalf, howbeit my bonds were prolonged for many hundred years.

O that I could be the man who could procure my Lord's glory to flow like a full sea, and blow like a mighty wind upon all the four airths⁷ of Scotland, England, and Ireland! O if I could write a book of his praises! O fairest among the sons of men, why stayest thou so long away? O heavens, move fast! O time, run, run, and hasten the marriage-day! for love is tormented with delays. O angels, O seraphim who stand before him, O blessed spirits who now see his face, set him on high; for, when you have

¹ Weak, feeble.

² The cause-way—keep on the road, maintain my ground.

³ To bow or stoop, as if to avoid a blow.

⁴ Debtor, bankrupt.

⁵ As he passes by.

⁶ Neglectful of, as if he did not know.

⁷ Points of the compass, quarters.

The above short glossary will perhaps render sufficiently plain Rutherford's most expressive Scotticisms, though we doubt not that their full force and beauty are much lost upon our southern, or as the Scotch say, "southron" ears.

worn your harps in his praises, all is too little, and is nothing, to cast the smell of the praise of that fair Flower, that fragrant Rose of Sharon, through many worlds!

Sir, take my hearty commendations to him, and tell him that I am sick of love. Grace be with you.

Yours in his sweet Lord Jesus,

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

Aberdeen, June 16th, 1637.

A LETTER BY THE LATE NATHANIEL MARRINER.

My very dear Friend,—Having a few minutes to spare, I thought I would send a few lines to my old friend, wishing grace, mercy, and peace may be multiplied to him, through our glorious Mediator. Amen and amen.

“I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.” (Jer. xxiv. 7.) This truth has been sweet to my soul very lately. You see it is the Lord alone who is the Giver of the new heart: “They shall be all taught of me.” I was led to look at what constituted the heart. First, the will. Now, through rich, free, and special mercy, I can say that God the Holy Ghost has made my soul willing: “Thy people shall be willing.” Made willing to acknowledge, in the presence of God, from heart-felt experience, that I am a lost, ruined, hell-deserving sinner—made willing to tell the Lord feelingly that he would be just in damning my soul to all eternity—made willing to beg at the throne, (at times,) and earnestly cry, long, and seek for mercy in the Lord’s own way—made willing to be saved in God’s own way—and made willing to bless God from heart and soul for such a way.

Again: “I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.” (Heb. x. 16.) From the first day the Lord stopped my rebellious soul, from that very day up to this very moment the Lord has been in my thoughts and in my mind; sometimes expecting he would cut me off as a cumberer of the ground, and at other times hovering about him for good. I do not say I have continually been at this all the day long, but I mean to say that there has not been one day but what I have been either meditating terror, or hoping God had done something for my soul.

Again: “I will circumcise their hearts to know me.” This the Lord does by shedding abroad his everlasting love in the soul. God the Holy Ghost secretly, sweetly, and powerfully melts the poor soul down; enables the heart, will, and affections to make choice of Christ; yea, causes every faculty of the soul to love, admire, and adore his dear name. Then the soul gets pondering over the discriminating and special love of God to such a base rebel: the great condescension and goodness of God the Holy Ghost, that ever he should have brought him to a concern of soul, and that He should

plant such longing desires, such cries, such hungerings and earnest wrestlings in the soul after his dear name. This is sure to break the stony, stubborn heart in pieces. The Holy Ghost bears witness to his own work at such a time, till we cry out, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; yea, all that is within me, bless his holy name." And sure I am that every part of God's work in the soul will bless and praise his most holy name at such a time as this. And how blessedly does the Lord receive and secure every grain of praise and glory: "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." (Psalm l. 23.) It is here that we love him because we feel he first loved us. This, my dear friend, is what I know the Lord has taught my soul, and ten thousand blessings on his dear and ever precious name for it. And this is what I believe to be the heart.

And then the Lord says, "Your heart shall live that seek God." (Psalm lxi. 32.) What an unspeakable mercy is this! It has been on my soul these two days. It really is a precious truth! For I would ask who planted these longings of soul, these many ardent wishes, these wrestlings and pleadings, these goings out after him? Who first melted down our souls at his dear feet? Who is it that gave us such a feeling concern of soul? Who gave us a hope in his name, "that maketh not ashamed?" Who led us to beg for mercy at his feet, under a deep feeling sense of our lost, ruined state? Who led us to acknowledge feelingly that without him we must perish? Who led us to tell the Lord in secret "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean?" And who is it that sometimes gives our souls such a strong compunction, and sweet and powerful persuasion of our interest in his covenant and everlasting love? Who is it that causes us to pour out our souls in secret prayer, sometimes while walking the street, sometimes in our daily business, sometimes by the fireside, sometimes on the old cobbler's * seat mending shoes, (then the thread goes well,) sometimes in the cellar, sometimes on our bed, and sometimes on our knees at a throne of grace? For really I have felt my soul all unexpectedly melted down in such a manner with a sense of his undeserved love to my worthless soul, that I have cried out, "Who is a God like unto thee?" Every object under heaven then sank into disesteem, and the Lord alone reigned and ruled in every faculty of the soul. O at such a time we are afraid of every thought disturbing him; and we charge all the daughters of Jerusalem, and every other name and every way, to let the Altogether Lovely reign and rule unmolested. My dear friend, sure I am it is God the Holy Ghost alone that can create these things in our souls; and nothing short of his almighty and soul-enlivening presence can keep these things alive in our hearts. If we were to be left, we should get into carnal security, dead sloth, drink into the spirit of the world, join its deathly pursuits, and become as dead to all spiritual life as a brickbat; this I know by painful experience. But God hath said, "I will give them a heart to know me."

* The above letter was, we believe, written to one who handled the awl. Marriner himself was an officer in the excise.

But again. "Your heart shall live that seek God." The conscience shall be kept alive and tender by the fear of God; the affections shall be kept alive and chaste to God; the mind shall be kept alive and stayed upon God the Son as the only Way whereby we can be saved; the circumcised ear shall be kept alive, so as to reject every dead letter preacher, every rotten Arminian, and every one that stands up without being sweetly taught and sent of God. And sure I am that whatever all others say or preach is of no use, for God the Holy Ghost will never bear his witness to anything but his own work. I can assure you I never can hear any man satisfactorily without the witness of God the Holy Ghost in my soul of the man's being sent of him; and I can say there is not one preacher out of twenty in London that I can hear, or that can point out my path, enable me to see where I stand, or go through the gates and take the stumbling-blocks out of the way. Instead of this, they put them in the way, nor do they know what a stumbling block is to a poor soul. If they attempt to put to their hands they are sure to do wrong, for they will be trying to move the soul's foundation. Some do try, and speak against the deity of our blessed Mediator, and thousands deny the work of the Holy Ghost altogether. Others will mimic his work in the souls of God's elect, his daily teaching, and how they are brought to a knowledge of the truth, and its effects. But the moment they begin we find and feel they never came in by the door, nor have we so learned Christ; therefore we reject them, whoever they may be. "My sheep know my voice;" therefore, if we do not find and feel our dear Shepherd's voice speaking in and through the man to the quickening, comforting, and establishing of our soul, and going before and teaching us knowledge, so as to bring glory to God, we cannot hear nor follow him. "Another they will not follow." And here we have great cause to thank and bless God; that we are not suffered to follow such, and that he enables us to see, feel, and know the difference. "And they shall know that I am the Lord by the things that I do for them."

Again. The Lord says, "They shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved." And you know that as far as God has taught us, and in the things he has done for us, we do stand firm, and we know how we received him.

My dear friend, you have great cause to be thankful to God for such a ministry as you have got at —. I can assure you my very soul is united to Mr. —. Sometimes I cannot help shedding tears when I think how sweetly he used to cast up my way, enable me to prove my birth under him, and sometimes he has brought my soul to such a point in experience that I have been obliged to acknowledge to the Lord what he had done, nor did I dare deny it; for really he would take up every feeling, every sensation, and every step of my path, till I have really stood astonished, and blessed the Lord from my inmost soul for what he had done for me.

I have sometimes gone into the chapel full of doubts, and

fearing the work in my soul was not genuine. But when he got up and showed how the Lord led him, and my soul was led along till we went heart and hand together, it was sweet travelling then. Upon these things he would insist that such experience was the Lord's work, till my worthless soul was melted down, like an infant, at the Redeemer's feet, the Holy Ghost bearing his sweet personal witness to every word he said. What a blessing, what a praising and thanking of the Lord at such a time as this! You, my dear friend, know what these sweet times are right well. These things formed such a close union to Mr. — as I believe in my soul I never shall lose; and I really love him for the truth's sake, for he stands so very manifested in my soul and conscience. Give my kind love to him and family. You may tell him I revere and love him for the truth's sake, and for feeding my soul with knowledge and understanding (instrumentally) in what God was doing for me.

I am about to leave London, but where I am going to I do not know. But I am not altogether destitute of hope or expectation that it may be at R—. I have laid the matter before the Lord many times, and now I would wish to wait and watch his hand. I am not so forward to push things in such a hurry as I used to be. I have seen the evil of that, and I am fully persuaded God will be consulted upon these matters as well as the other. "I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, for they shall return unto me with their whole heart." (Jeremiah xxiv. 7.)

You have my thoughts upon what I believe to be the heart, and how we know it is the Lord by the things that he does in our souls. "Is not this the Christ?" Now it is said, "They shall be my people," in the future tense. Now in a covenant sense we ever were the people of God. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love;" there, you see, it is in the past tense. But the apostle says, "The son differs nothing from a servant all the time he is under tutors and governors." While we are living in a state of nature, dead in trespasses and sins, without God and without hope in the world, we know nothing about being the children of God. But when God the Holy Ghost quickens our dead soul, and brings us to hope in his mercy through our Lord Jesus Christ, in his own good time he enables the poor soul to say, "My Lord and my God," and "I am his, and he is mine." And the Holy Ghost speaks sweetly, and persuades the soul that the Lord's people is his portion, and that he is one of them; then the poor soul sweetly echoes it, "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul." Here you see, my dear friend, we make a sweet joint.

Again. It is said, "They shall seek me with their whole heart;" and sure I am that when God the Holy Ghost shines in the soul, there is every faculty engaged in seeking and longing after Him, whom our souls would love more and more. At such a time as this

He is the only object desirable, and sweetly and fully employs every thought, so that we serve him with a willing mind, and a whole and perfect heart: "And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind; if thou seek him, he will be found of thee." (1 Chron. xxviii. 9.) What a mercy is this!

My dear friend, I must now draw to a close. May the Lord keep our souls very chaste to what he does; may he keep us very, vory low at his feet; may he keep our consciences very tender, by keeping his fear alive in our souls; may we be kept more and more waiting and watching his dear hand; may we be enable d to see his goodness in all our concerns—it really is my very soul's desire. May we acknowledge him in all our ways.

Your affectionate friend for the truth's sake,

NATHANIEL MARRINER.

Walworth, January, 1827.

TWO LETTERS BY WILLIAM HUNTINGTON.

My dear Friend,—How I came by your letter, or when it came, I know not, but having got my file full of letters, I was going to examine and burn them, when I found yours unsealed, which I opened, and read its contents, at which I was much surprised, having had few letters lately but what breathed reproach, scandal, falsehood, and blasphemy, without either name or number of abode, which has made me almost as sick of opening them as paying postage for them. I suppose yours came with one of those; and having read the first, I cared not to proceed further, not choosing to have my mind disturbed by oaths and curses when I have been going to deliver what God has been pleased to give me.

Your kind letter sent me upon my knees, with a tribute of thanks for his kind providence, and for making use of so poor a creature to the edification or comfort of any of his elect. The earnest longings after God which you express are produced under a divine influence; and God promises to satiate the weary and longing soul, and replenish every fainting soul. The changes in the mind are, as the Redeemer says, like the wind, that bloweth where it listeth. The sound and motion are both heard and felt internally by the awakened soul, but not easily accounted for, though even in those desires there is a supernatural sweetness and satisfaction, and a real confidence that it is of God; but when that gale is withdrawn or blown over, all affection, life, and motion cease, and the soul withers, like the green herb. Watch your frames and changes, and minute down in writing all visits, deliverances, encouragements, love-tokens, promises, and hoping seasons that you are favoured with, for they will help you in time to come. If Satan is obliged to shift from his black gown to his white surplice, it is a proof that his nest is disturbed, that he cannot keep his goods in peace, that the light discovers him, that the sword of the Spirit

touches him, that the cross terrifies him, that he cannot keep the uppermost seat in the affections, and is in danger of losing the fort royal of the heart. You will shortly see what you have never seen, when the dear Lord comes to display his glory in you, which is what he promises to those that feel their need of him, and wait at his gates for him.

Dear Sir, farewell! That God may reward thee with a free grace reward, and hear my poor prayers in thy behalf, is the prayer and desire of your obliged servant in Christ Jesus,

W. H., S. S.

Dear —,—I would have answered yours before if I could, but having a deal on my hands, I am obliged to wait till a leisure hour comes. As for your time it is always ready. The parents are to lay up for the children, and not the children for the parents. But I am like Moses, ready to fret when they say to me, "Give us bread;" especially when I am in the case of the importunate householder, who complained that his friend was come and he had nothing to set before him. I love to see the children of God grow in grace; and if they do, they are just like the two daughters of the horse-leech, always crying, "Give, give."

Dream not of a road to heaven that has no stones, crosses, roughs, crooks, or straits in it. Prosperity and adversity, tribulation and peace, crosses and comforts, joyfulness and liberty, will attend every real pilgrim more or less. Fiery trials stir up and discover the native enmity of the mind and heart, and purifying grace purges away the dross. No trials, no heart purity: "I will purify them," says God, "as silver is purified, and try them as gold is tried; they shall call on my name, and I will hear them, and I will say, It is my people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God."

I wonder not at your being perplexed in circumstances. Where there is much pride there will be much humbling. Poverty may pull down a high head, if reproof cannot. By weaning, I do not mean that God will desert his people or leave them comfortless. I mean God's tender indulgences in hearing prayer before we speak, and answering it while we are speaking; his communing with us day and night, sleeping and waking; the perpetual sounding of his bowels towards us; the ravishing views that we have, and the wonderful manifestations of pardoning love and redeeming grace, may and will at times be withheld. This I call weaning, and it is done that faith, patience, and constancy may be tried; that we may watch the hand of God, know the old man from the new, the motions of corruption from those of grace; be led to consider the covenant, to live on stronger food, to be more steady in our profession, not always upon eagles' wings, nor desponding if his comfortable presence be withdrawn. The immutability of God's counsel, the stability of the covenant, the invariableness of the Almighty, and the eternity of his love, are things, when clearly seen, savingly manifested, and soundly credited, that fix the heart,

so that we are not like children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, but learn to walk steadily in the faith, and enjoy a solid peace, attended with a comfortable persuasion that neither life nor death shall ever separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

When God says, "Give me thy heart;" "Present thy body as a living sacrifice;" "Offer me praise and prayer;" these things are easy when we find his presence. But when we are called, according to our after-experience, to offer up our comfortable frames, this touches us to the quick; anything but this; "Spare this, *it is a little one*; is it not a little one? and my soul shall live." We dread the furnace and the fight of faith. Hence the new-born soul creeps to the bosom of the good Shepherd, and often dreams of its rest never being disturbed. But the breast of divine consolation will often slip out of the mouth, either sleeping or waking, and we shall conclude with the prophet, "The Comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me." (Lam. i. 16.) You complain of trials, and say, "What must I do, who have such a nest of distressed little ones? and every day, instead of a door of hope, there is nothing but fresh scenes of famine:" "The destruction of the poor is their poverty." At present I have as much as my heart, head, and hands can manage. I thirst for the salvation of sinners, but I meet with opposition from every quarter: from preacher and professor as well as from devil and worldlings. I believe I shall have my share of the heat and burden of the day. However, I still gain by trading. God will wean me from every arm of flesh; from friends, from guides, and from the whole church of God, as well as from nominal professors. He will make me stand in his strength and in the testimony that I have received.

Feeling over-tender, and too much fear of wounding or offending the weak, is a bar to faithfulness, and a cloak to hypocrites. My own sufferings have made me savour too much of the things that are of men in this respect; but the treatment that I have met with at present will, I trust, cure me of this disease. Then I shall savour a little more of God, and be able to see the meaning of the text, "Call now, if there be any that answer, and to which of *the saints* wilt thou turn?" (Job v. 1.) The Lord's mercy in Christ has been wonderful to me; and though I have as many trials as I can bear up under, yet the kingdom of God is sure, and I have a good hope through grace in my heart which I shall not be disappointed of, nor do I believe that my expectation will be ever cut off. At present I am not on Mount Tabor, nor in the valley of Tophet. (Isaiah xxx. 33.) "My foot standeth in an even place." (Psalm xxvi. 12.) A continual ray seems to lie on my path, in which blessed beams something new is daily discovered. Supporting grace is with me according to my day. I eye the end of my path, and know it will terminate in the happy enjoyment of the reconciled countenance of my God, after which my soul longs more than the hireling for the shadow. But my family hangs fast by my skirt, and I am in a strait betwixt two. My persecutors are unwearied, and no won-

der, for their master neither sweats nor tires: I shall be a savour of of death unto death, if not of life unto life. My work is with my God, and if they be not saved, it shall not alter the state of my soul; "I know in whom I have believed."

The Lord be with thee, and grant thee according to thine own heart, and work in thee all the good pleasure of his will and the work of faith with power, while

I remain, yours to serve,

W. H., S. S.

EDITORS' REVIEW.

A Protest Against the Doctrines, "That a Child of God cannot Backslide; That the Lord does not Chastise his Children for Sin; That Sin in the Thought of the Heart is as Offensive to God as Sin in the Outward Action." By John Kershaw.—Groombridge, London.

(Concluded from page 223.)

Great errors are often closely allied to great truths. Such near neighbours, indeed, are they, that, though an eternal wall of separation exists between them, they are sometimes mistaken by ignorant and unwary persons for each other. We may instance this in the Socinian error concerning the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Because he is *truly* man, they say that he is *only* man. That he is man is a great truth; that he is nothing but man is a great error. They thus build a capital error on a capital truth. Error cannot stand by itself; it must lean on truth, or it will fall headlong. Its ugly visage must be concealed by the mask of truth; its native hue must be coloured with a dash of truth; its rank taste must be disguised by a few drops of truth.

Thus it is with the error of the non-chastisement of believers. It is a great error founded upon a great truth. What is the truth on which it leans? It is this, that God views his people so complete in Christ that he sees no sin in them. Is not this scriptural and most blessed truth? Most undoubtedly. "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel." "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." (Numbers xxiii. 21; Solomon's Song iv. 7.)

The testimony of Scripture is most explicit, that, as regards the acceptance of the persons of the elect, they are "complete in Christ," "accepted in the Beloved," "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." Washed in Christ's blood, and clothed in his righteousness, the whole company of the elect are "without fault before the throne of God."

In this sense God sees no sin in them—that is, no sin for which to punish them eternally. But let us not take a part of truth only, lest we thereby fall into grievous error. "The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," holds alike good in the court of heaven and in the court of earth. Let us not dash one truth

against another, lest we destroy both; let us not take the sword of truth to strike the vitals of truth; above all, let us not drop the poison of error into the wine of truth, lest we convert a wholesome beverage into a deadly draught.

We are not at liberty to lay down from God's word certain articles of truth, and then deduce from them doctrines which are flatly contrary to that very word by which we profess to be guided, and from which we have already drawn the original articles themselves. This is to say and unsay, build up with one hand and pull down with the other, turn the truth of God into a lie, and employ the kingdom of Christ to support the throne of Belial.

For instance, God has revealed in his word two distinct and separate truths, which, rightly understood, do not clash with or contradict each other. The one is, that God sees no sin in believers; the other is, that God chastises sin in believers.

The question at once arises, How can both these propositions be true? If God sees no sin, how can he punish for it? If he punishes for sin, how can he not see it? If an earthly judge, it may be argued, sees no sin in an accused person at the bar, how can he justly punish him for it? And if the judge sentence him to punishment, is it not because he has been proved guilty of a crime, and therefore the judge sees sin in him?

But the question is not to be argued thus. In the things of God we must not admit human arguments, deductions, and analogies. This is to take strange fire into the sanctuary. With a believer this is, or should be, the question: What hath the Lord spoken? What hath *He* said in his word of truth? It is only because God has said so in his word that we believe in the non-imputation of sin to the elect. We do not gather this from human reason, or by argument from natural analogies. It is a truth of pure revelation, and received only on the testimony of God.

Now, does not the chastisement of believers for their sins rest on the same foundation? Is not *that* as much a truth of pure revelation as the non-imputation of sin to the elect is a truth of pure revelation? That it most certainly is so we shall presently show beyond all controversy; but may we pick and choose in God's word? May we take up this and lay down that—carry away what suits us, and throw down what does not suit us, just as if we were picking up shells by the sea-side, or buying Saturday provision in the market? The word of God teaches us a very different lesson. The language of that is: "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto *all* thy commandments." "Let my heart be sound in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed." "*All* thy commandments are faithful." "Therefore I esteem *all* thy precepts concerning *all* things to be right; and I hate every false way." "Thy word is true from the beginning; and *every one* of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever." "My tongue shall speak

of thy word; for *all* thy commandments are righteousness." (Psalm cxix. 6, 80, 86, 128, 160, 172.)

The promised Comforter is "to guide into *all* truth;" (John xvi. 13;) and it is a heavy charge which God brings against the priests of old—as surely he might against the priests now—that they "did not keep his ways, but were partial in the law." (Mal. ii. 9.)

If, then, these two propositions—the non-imputation of sin to believers, and the chastisement of sin *in* believers—were irreconcilable according to mere human reason, we must still receive both; for both stand precisely on the same foundation, and are to be believed by the same evidence. As regards faith, the word of God is our sheet-anchor. Abandon that, and we are at once upon the rocks. Faith that does not rest on the word of God is but fancy, an *ignis fatuus*, a will-o'-the-wisp, that shines but to deceive, a flickering, bog-born light, not a ray from the Sun of Righteousness.

Here must we take a firm stand; for not to rest upon the word of God, is to rest upon a lie; not to be taught out of the truth of God, is to be in error; not to be guided by the revealed will of God, is to be led by Satan at his will.

We have dwelt thus long upon this point, as wishing to lay our foundation deep and broad. If we have spent some little time upon fortifying this point, it is because, in military language, it is the key of the whole position. Let this point be maintained, the victory is ours; let it be taken, it is the adversary's.

What, then, has God said upon this point? Several passages we may bring forward, which, to our mind, settle the question beyond all controversy.

1. Our first shall be that well-known passage, Psalm lxxxix. 27—36: "Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David: his seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me."

Five things are plainly evident from this inspired testimony:—

1. That Christ is here addressed under the name of David.
2. That "his children may break God's statutes, and keep not his commandments."
3. That this in them is "transgression" and "iniquity."

4. That God "will visit this their transgression with the rod, and this their iniquity with stripes."

5. That "nevertheless God will not take his loving-kindness utterly from him, (as the covenant Head in whom the elect stand, and therefore not from them as his members,) nor suffer his faithfulness (to his original and eternal oath and covenant) to fail."

What, then, can be more express, or what can more plainly and explicitly declare that God does see sin in believers, and does chastise them for it, than this testimony? For, it will be observed, it is of believers that the whole passage speaks. It is the language, not of the law, but of the gospel. The promises in it are made to Christ and to his seed. The eternity of mercy; the stability of the covenant; unchangeable loving-kindness, and immutable faithfulness—are these spiritual blessings, which the law never knew, promised in it? They are. But are not "stripes" and the "rod" promised too? Who, then, dare separate them? God hath joined them together, who shall venture to put them asunder? God will not suffer man, with impunity, thus to tamper with his holy word; and he who attempts to do so manifests thereby that he is not one of those who tremble at God's word, and with whom the Lord has promised to dwell.

In the face, then, of such a plain, positive declaration from God's own mouth, of what value are reasonings, and deductions, and conclusions fitted and framed, moulded and modelled according to carnal and human argument? How do we know that, as regards the acceptance of the persons of the elect, God sees no sin in them? From the Bible. And how do we know that God chastises believers for their sins? From the Bible. Both truths stand upon the same foundation; both are drawn from the same inspired source; both are revealed by, and are to be believed upon, the same divine authority. If we credit the one, we must credit the other; if we are at liberty to reject the one, we are at liberty to reject the other.

"But we know that God sees no sin in believers," it may be replied, "from something else besides the Bible. We know it from experience, and the sweet inward testimony of the blessed Spirit." Very good; it is the best, the only way of knowing the truth of God aright. But don't you think that the chastisement of believers for sin is to be learnt from experience, and from the teaching and testimony of the Blessed Spirit, just as much as their justification from sin? Are there not frowns as well as smiles, stripes as well as kisses, clouds and storms as well as light and sunshine? And how are these to be learnt but in experience and inward feeling? Nay, we are very certain that if you know the one you must know the other; and that all you say about your completeness in Christ is but empty talk and letter faith, unless you have experimentally learnt that the Lord can wound as well as heal, frown as well as smile, chastise as well as forgive.

2. But as we are at present confining ourselves to the *doctrinal*

part of the question, we proceed to other testimonies from the word of God. And what more plain and explicit declaration can we find than that contained in Heb. xii. 5—8. "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

The apostle here uses an illustration drawn from the natural relationship of father and child. Why do earthly parents chastise their children? Is it not for their faults? Could we justify a parent for chastising a child, but for some actual fault—for something in him which deserves chastisement? It would be actual cruelty, positive tyranny, were the rod brought out but for some wilful transgression. And if not so *spiritually*, the comparison must fall to the ground. If, then, we deny that God chastises his children for sin, we are reduced to this dilemma: either that God does not chastise his people at all, which is directly contrary to the word of truth; or that God does not chastise them for sin, which makes the Lord an arbitrary tyrant.

But several things are observable in this inspired testimony.

1. The *certainty* of this correction. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."

2. Its *universality*. "And scourgeth every son whom he receiveth;" "Whereof *all* are partakers."

3. Its witness *for* God's living family. "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as sons."

4. Its witness *against* unchastised professors. "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

If, then, you deny that God chastises believers for sin, you prove that you are not a believer; you sign your own condemnation as a bastard; you make it manifest that as you do not know God as a chastising Father, you do not know him as a loving Father; and that therefore all your religion is in your head, that all your profession is but empty talk, and that you are yet in your sins.

3. Our third testimony is what the Lord himself says, Rev. iii. 19. "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten." Rebukes and chastisement are here not confined to a part of the Lord's people—a few dreadful backsliders who draw down upon themselves signal chastisement by their signal iniquities; but it is declared to be the allotted portion of *all*. "As many as I love"—all for whom I lived and died, and love with an everlasting love, "I rebuke and chasten."

As error is closely interwoven with error, so is truth closely

interwoven with truth. The former we saw was the case with the doctrines of non-backsliding and non-chastisement. In fact, the one necessarily follows from the other. If I cannot backslide, I certainly cannot be chastised; for I am only chastised because I backslide. So if *all* God's children are chastised, it most evidently proves that *all* God's children backslide. For *why* are they chastised? For obedience or disobedience? for pleasing God, or displeasing him? for keeping his precepts, or breaking them?

In fact, here lies the difference between a professor and a possessor, a bastard and a son. All men—regenerate or unregenerate, in a state of grace or in a state of nature, sin against God in thought, word, or action. Human nature, indeed, can do nothing else; for sin is its very being, essence, and element, and is as much interwoven into the very constitution of man since the fall, as the bones, and muscles, and nerves into his natural body. But the sins of some men are pardoned, and of others retained; some are chastised for sin, and others, in this life, passed by; some are judged here in their consciences, and thus chastened of the Lord and saved; and others are judged hereafter in their bodies and souls, and are for ever condemned with the world. (1 Cor. xi. 32.)

Thus chastisement for sin is a family mark, a sign of sonship, a proof of the love of God, a token of fatherly kindness and care. Woe, then, to the man whom God does not chasten, and whom he lets go recklessly on in that boastful, presumptuous security which with many passes for strong faith! There is a reckoning to come of which he little dreams. Were he a son, he would be chastised for his sins; he would be brought to repentance and godly sorrow; he would with grief of heart confess his backslidings; and he would be blessed with pardon and peace.

Thus every one who denies that God chastises his people for sins proclaims aloud that he has no part nor lot in the matter; that he is out of the secret which is with the righteous; that God is not his Father; that he is an impenitent rebel; that he is not led or taught of the Spirit; that all his religion is in the flesh; and that his faith is presumption, his hope a delusion, and his confidence a lie.

It is indeed an inestimable mercy, a choice new covenant blessing, to be chastised for sin. Were there no reproofs, no frowns, no stripes, no sense of God's displeasure, no guilt of conscience, no burdens, no inward condemnation and distress on account of sin, into what an awful state of recklessness and impenitency might not a child of God fall!

It is his rich mercy to be chastised—a precious mark that God careth for him, so careth for him as to bring him thereby to himself, and make him a partaker of his holiness.

Let others, then, go recklessly on; let them enjoy their false liberty; let them each "bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkenness to thirst." The child of God envies not such

a state. Bonds, and fetters, and imprisonment are better to him than such false liberty. He dreads above all things to be left without some dealing of God upon his soul. "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone," is to him a fearful sentence.

And thus he chooses, in his right mind, affliction rather than iniquity; bears the indignation of the Lord because he has sinned against him; as a hungry soul, finds every bitter thing sweet; puts his mouth into the dust if so be there may be hope; repents of, confesses, and forsakes his sins, and finds mercy. In this path walked Job, David, Asaph, Heman, Hezekiah, Jeremiah, and the saints of old; and in this path walk the choicest and most exercised saints now.

With these remarks we conclude our Review. It will be sufficient for us, if we have drawn the attention of God's living family to these vital points. Our object has not been strife and contention, but to show, as far as we have been enabled, from the word of God and from experience, such truth as deeply concerns every living soul; and if we have erred on the side of prolixity, it has been from a desire to leave open no door for cavil or misapprehension.

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

Too many modern preachers resemble auctioneers, who put up heaven to the highest bidders.—*Serle*.

Many who have escaped the rocks of gross sin have been cast away on the sands of self-righteousness.—*Dyer*.

If thou art not born again, all thy reformation is nought. Thou hast shut the door, but the thief is still in the house.—*Boston*.

Christ can defend his own truths when his poor creatures and ministers, who contended for them as well as they could, are laid in the silent dust.—*Cole*.

Were it not for needy, helpless, thirsting sinners, Christ would have no customers. The blessings of grace and glory would, as it were, lie upon his hands.—*Arrowsmith*.

Paul was Nero's prisoner, (at Rome,) but Nero was much more God's; and while God had work for Paul, he found him friends both in court and prison.—*Gurnall*.

If I could but be master of that house-idol *myself*, my own mine; my own wit, will, credit, and ease, how blessed were I! Alas! we have more need to be redeemed from ourselves than from the devil and the world.—*Rutherford*.

God is always present with his people, and that for gracious purposes, (and not a bare spectator,) so as to proportion and measure out their afflictions to them, that they may not be above their strength, nor more than their need.—*Bunyan*.

THE

GOSPEL STANDARD.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”—Matt. v. 6.

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”—2 Tim. i. 9.

“The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.”—Rom. xi. 7.

“If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”—Acts vii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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GOD FAITHFUL TO HIS PROMISES; BEING OUR
ONLY REFUGE IN DARK AND TRYING TIMES, OR
IN AFFLICTIVE PROVIDENCES.

BY JOHN RUSK.

(Concluded from page 234.)

10. Another branch of doing good is, *to be just and upright in our dealings one with another*; in spiritual things not to flatter one another; to be just between man and man. And thus, being consistent in our Christian walk and matters all right within, we shall, like Levi, “walk with God in peace and equity.” Now, this is doing good: “He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” But to each of these more particularly.

“Do justly.” “Then,” says the Pharisee, “I shall get on well here.” Why, what have you got to say on this head? “Lord,” says the Pharisee, “I thank thee I am not as other men; I fast twice in the week, and pay tithes of all that I possess.” Well, and of course you think you do justice? “Yes, I certainly do.” And this is an earnest (which I will prove from God’s book) of your eternal damnation. Hear the word of God: “There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness.” Now, mind, it is his righteousness, therefore you may wrap it about you as much as you please, but, as God liveth, you shall find it a bed too short to stretch yourself on, and a covering too narrow. Say you, “You are against all good works.” I tell you, You are false. But I am against a

sheep-skin on a wolf's back; you appear outwardly righteous, but God knows your abominable heart.

Now, when the Scriptures say, "There is a just man that perisheth," it is said so because such people boast and pretend to be just; but when God speaks his real language of man, his thoughts differ from man's. The Pharisee says, "I am just;" but God says that, by nature, "there is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good and sinneth not." Now, as these Pharisees thought themselves just, so they thought God's elect wicked; hence they say, "Stand by thyself, come not near unto me, I am holier than thou." Again: "I am not like this publican." "But," says God, "you shall perish in your righteousness; and though you call my elect wicked because they feel their true state by the fall, and being convinced of it, and feeling the weight of their sins, dare not lift up their eyes to heaven, but smite their breast, believing they are guilty, now, as wicked as you may think them, they shall prolong their life in their wickedness." This, I believe, is God's meaning of the text. And now, let one of the best of them try the goodness of his teeth to crack this nut: but I know he never can.

But "to do justly." 1. It lies in real confession of sin, so that feelingly I may in my heart acknowledge what God says in his word; and this is doing justly. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." And what follows? "That thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest." Now, God is just: "A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." And he says, "Every imagination of man's heart is evil, only evil, and that continually." Then, when David felt this and acknowledged it, he justified God in his real description of the human heart; and all that say to the contrary are unjust, as God liveth, and never did they the least justice that was well pleasing to God since in the world they have been.

2. Another branch is, the Blessed Spirit working faith in my heart to apprehend and lay hold of the Lord Jesus Christ's everlasting spotless obedience or righteousness: "This is the name whereby he shall be called"—What is it? Why, "Jehovah our Righteousness;" and the very moment that by faith (not assent or consent only, but in the heart, for "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness,") we are enabled to lay hold of this righteousness, we feel the blessed effects of it. As the Lord God of Israel lives, we do justice, and are as just, righteous, holy, and upright in God's sight as if we had never sinned at all. We take both his active and passive obedience in the arms of our faith, and know in our own conscience that we are just persons in the sight of God. Say you, "I can see many things that you do wrong." Not a thousandth part of what we see ourselves; but we groan under it, and hate ourselves for it. But can you see any defect in Christ's righteousness? "No," you say. Then hold your tongue for ever, and hear what Paul says; "He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Again: "By his

obedience shall many be made righteous." Say you, "Paul is always harping on that." Then take the prophet Isaiah: "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." What do you say to that? Now, faith brings it in; it is no part of it, but a hand given us with which to lay hold of it, and we are to live by it, and are just, "For the just shall live by his faith;" and if you live and die without it, you will be damned for ever, as sure as you are born; for the unrighteous cannot enter the kingdom of God, but "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." Then, as faith, under the influence of the Spirit, is an act of the new man, we do justly.

3. Once more on doing justly. We do justly, when, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, we put on the new man; and every thing else in us is unjust. This will teach us to act with justice to our fellow creatures. But we have not always the new man on; and when we put on the old man, to our shame be it spoken, we can act very unjustly; but we are often ashamed of ourselves, and long to be delivered from this cursed nature of ours.

Again. The new man, when put on, teaches us to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world." But when we put on the old man, which is too often the case, that is the reverse, and we find little or no difference between us and the world. We can join in with them, drink into their spirit, be light and trifling, and often indulge our besetting sins, and make a heavy rod for our back by so doing. We are the poorest, weakest things that ever were, and unless kept by Divine Power we are as unstable as water. Sometimes we backslide openly, and very often in heart, as you read, "My people are bent to backslide." But our mercy is, God has promised to "water us every moment, and keep us night and day." And it well becomes us, knowing our own weakness, to plead this blessed promise. Now, says Paul, "Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness (or justice) and true holiness."

Thus, by an honest confession of our real lost and undone state to God, we "do justly" in what he says of us as fallen in his word; and by the act of faith, under the Spirit's influence, we "do justly" as considered in Christ Jesus, taking hold of his perfect righteousness; and under the same Spirit's influence "we do justly," by putting on the new man of grace. Point out any more if you can; I cannot; and therefore proceed to the next thing.

"Love Mercy." Now, mercy is an attribute of God, and, as Milton says,

"From first to last shall brightest shine."

This mercy never had a beginning, and will never have an end: "For the mercy of the Lord is *from* everlasting." "But when did everlasting begin?" you say, "I cannot tell." Nor I either. And it is *to* everlasting, and was fixed upon us in Christ Jesus; for God the Father gave to his dear Son "the sure mercies of David."

"Not," says Paul, "by works of righteousness which we have done, but of his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost;" which is to wash away enmity from the mind, unbelief and stubbornness from the will, hardness and pride from the heart, idols from the affections, and guilt from the conscience. And to renew us is, to give us love by shedding it abroad in our hearts; and likewise humility, faith, and meekness. And he will make us willing to receive all this in the day of his power, cleanse our conscience from all sin and guilt, and set our affections on God, his dear Son, and things above. Now, if your heart and soul are set on these things, you love mercy. "Oh," say you, "I am very kind to my fellow creatures, and merciful to the poor; but I hate all you have said about mercy, for I never had it and know nothing about it." What you say of your mercy is spoken of in this text: "The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel." But, on the other hand, if you love regeneration in yourself and this regeneration in the family of God, you are one that loves mercy.

Moreover, this mercy is a part of the new man, and cannot be exercised when we please. There is a deal of fleshly pity and compassion in the world, that often passes for it; but as this is a part of the old man, it is corrupt. But let us abide by the word of God. Now, what will make us love mercy is this: After we have long struggled against the corruptions of our hearts, and been made heart-sick of all our evil ways, and sensible that if we are left to ourselves damnation is as sure as if we were in hell, the Blessed Spirit will help us at a throne of grace to confess to God, and heartily to fall under all the charges of God against us, with a "Who can tell but the Lord will have mercy on me?" and therefore we cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" "But," say you, "is there any promise to ground such a petition on?" Yes; God says it is his new covenant: "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and remember their sins no more;" and we must plead it for Christ's sake, for God hath given to him "the sure mercies of David." Now, here we are to obtain mercy, and this will make us love it, when it comes in time of need.

Lastly. We shall at times feel mercy to the children of God in praying for them in private, or trying to speak feelingly to them; telling them what God has done for us; and if they are in temporal want, as far as we can we shall assist them. But all this will meet with much opposition from the old man within us; therefore we are told to put him off, and to "put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved bowels of mercies." I have discovered these contrary principles in myself. I had, at one time, a few pounds to spare, and knew of a person who feared God that stood in need of assistance, but my heart was so shut up that I could not give him the help that I ought; but after a while I felt my hardness give way, and my heart open to him. And this is loving mercy. I might add, that it will work at times also to men in general.

But I proceed. "Walk humbly with thy God," which I mention in three particulars.

1. To walk with God is, to have our will laid straight with his. For "how can two walk together except they be agreed?" and you may be sure you are right here, when you can choose Christ as your all-sufficient God with all your heart.

2. You must have peace in your heart, and a tender conscience. It is said of Levi, "that he walked with God in peace and equity."

3. Self-loathing, as before mentioned, namely, walking humbly with God. Now, this is what God requires, and this is doing good.

11. *To hold fast the faithful word*, as we have been taught the pure gospel, is to do good; and so says Paul to Timothy, "That good thing which was committed to thee keep, by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us." Now, this implies that many will try to dispute us out of it. The Arminian is against an imputed righteousness; the Antinomian against a holy walk; the Arian against the Godhead of Christ; the formal professor against the power of religion; the free-willer against election; some against the doctrine of the Trinity; the bastard Calvinist is for the law as a rule of life, which is the ministration of death, and he rejects the grace of God, which teaches us to deny ungodliness. Now, how are we to oppose these heresies? Not by fleshly reasonings to try to bring them on our side of the question, but by abiding by the power that we have felt.

But to each of these, then. Never give up an imputed righteousness, but insist on the peace it brought to your conscience: "For, being justified, by faith we have peace with God;" and "The work of righteousness is peace." Insist on a holy life from a principle of grace, and that faith (Antinomian faith) without works is dead, being alone. Insist on it that Christ is God, because he has searched your heart, as he says in the Revelation. Insist on the power of godliness to quicken, to pardon, to work faith, to raise to hope, and to lay hold of God's love. Tell such that a sheep-skin is of no use. God requires truth in the hidden parts of the heart. Insist on election, by telling them that the Spirit bears witness in your conscience that you are a child of God, which he does not to every one. Never give up the Trinity, while you feel the love of the Father, the peace of the Son, and "Abba Father" being the cry of the Spirit in your heart. And lastly, while you feel persevering grace, pardoning grace, and quickening grace, oppose them that cry up the law.

But you may say, "I cannot come up to these things; and so far from contending for them, I do not know whether I have any of them myself." Pray, did you ever feel your heart go out in affection to a sent servant of Christ? "Yes," you say. Then you have got all in one: "He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me." Then you have Christ; and Paul says "Christ is all." Now, this is good, namely, to hold fast the gospel by faith: "Hold that fast that thou hast, that no man take thy crown." "Buy the

truth, (let it cost you what it may,) and sell it not." This is good advice. "But who is sufficient (we may say with Paul) for these things?" Paul tells us, "Our sufficiency is of God."

12. *Not to cause the weak to stumble* is good. They may be made to stumble by another's inconsistent walk. If they have heard of our faith, and find it is consistent, they will next look for our outward walk; and if they find we can join with the world, and yet talk of faith, this will cause them to stumble. Why? Because God says, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." A second thing that will make them stumble is this: If you only tell the best side of the question, they will think you are altogether holy, and that you have not to cope with unbelief, hardness of heart, enmity, uncleanness, and pride, as they have; and this will make them stumble. Now, it is good not to cause the weak to stumble. (Rom. xiv. 21.)

13. Whatever light shines on the word of God to us, or in our experience, *it is not right or good to bury it*: "Do men light a candle, and set it under a bushel?" No. "Let your light so shine before men, that they, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven." And to labour to bring others to Christ, telling them what you were by nature, and what grace has done for you; how much you are indebted to matchless grace; trying, likewise, to bring them under the word, and praying God to bless it to them. This is being zealous of good works, and will meet with much opposition from Satan, for he will tell us that we want to exalt ourselves, and that it is only head-notions, that we go too far in speaking to people, that we want to exceed other Christians to get a name. But this must not discourage us at all. "Be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that such labour is not in vain in the Lord." Paul himself found much opposition, and therefore says, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." And if we find the greatest opposition, we must at it again; and the weaker we are in ourselves, the better we shall succeed, for "his strength is made perfect in weakness." But this lesson is not easily learned. Now, this is good, as Paul says, "But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing." (Gal. iv. 18.)

14. The last thing I shall mention about doing good is this, namely, *to ascribe the whole glory of all we have and are to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, agreeable to that short prayer: "Thine is the glory." "Yes," say you, "I know the Lord's prayer very well, and have often repeated it after the minister at church." I do not doubt that; but do you know that you must be a happy partaker of the Holy Ghost as a Spirit of love, power, and a sound mind, before you can repeat it aright?

Now, let us go through the Lord's prayer. "Our Father." Then take Paul's comment: "We have received the Spirit of adoption,

whereby we cry, 'Abba Father.' But without this, Christ tells you "ye are of your father the devil, and his works ye do."

"Which art in heaven." But the devil your father is not there, but with the rest is cast down into hell.

"Hallowed be thy name." This is praising God, and "he that offers praise glorifies him." But, remember, "The offering up of the Gentiles is accepted." But how? Why, by "being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." But such characters as you, are in Scripture called unthankful, unholy, sensual, not having the Spirit.

"Thy kingdom come." Now, none will put up this petition till they feel Satan, sin, and death reign in them, and they are made sick of his service. But when this kingdom does come, Satan is cast out of the heart, and Christ takes his place: "He dwelleth in the heart by faith." "The king is set on his holy hill;" and as a hill is a high place, he is uppermost in our affections and reigns. Sin also gives place to grace, and grace reigns. Death gives place to life. And this is brought about by the Holy Ghost, which is the Stronger than the strong man armed, that takes away his arms, and spoils his goods.

"Thy will be done." Now, the Spirit is called the Spirit of Power, to bend the stubborn will: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power;" but without this your mouth may say what it will, but your heart says, "We will not have this man to reign over us." "Yes," you say, "but we wish the Father's will to be done, though we reject Christ." You are a liar: "For this," says Christ, "is the will of him that sent me, that whosoever seeth the Son and believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life."

"On earth as it is in heaven." To worship him on earth, and not idols; to love him on earth; to worship on earth; to fight against his enemies in defence of his truth; cleave to his family; watch his hands and handy-works; and by faith to realize heavenly things; "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen:" thus heaven begins below. But what is all outside religion?

"Give us this day our daily bread." But you in the first sense of the words sacrifice to your own net, and burn incense to your own drag. Incense is prayer: "Let my prayer come up before thee like incense." Sufficient for the day is not enough for you; you must take thought for the morrow; you are for a stock in hand. And as it respects Christ the Bread of Life, that feeds our souls daily, if the Spirit never testifies of him to your heart as your Saviour, you feed on the vanities of this world and your own performances.

"And forgive us our trespasses." Now, you must feel the burden of your sins, or else you darken counsel by words without knowledge; and the Spirit must apply the atonement to your conscience. "But ye are washed; but ye are cleansed in the name of the Lord Jesus, (and now mind,) and by the Spirit of our God." But what has your saying the Lord's prayer done for you? Are you forgiven?

"As we forgive them that trespass against us." This you never can do to a child of God, if you have not his Spirit; for they are to be hated of all men for his name sake; and they will trespass against you, if they are faithful, and oppose your hypocritical profession.

"Lead us not into temptation." This you need not pray for, for you are led captive by the devil at his will. You must have the Spirit of God in a measure, as Christ had it without measure, when the Holy Ghost was on him in a bodily shape like a dove. It was after this that he was tempted forty days and forty nights.

"Deliver us from evil." Did evil ever grieve you as it did Jabez? Did you ever feel the evil of your nature? "When I would do good evil is present." Did you ever feel an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God? "No," you say. Then your empty words will amount to nothing, for God says "he will bring evil upon all flesh;" for the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God. But Christ in John xvii. prays his Father to keep his people from the evil; and this is done by the Spirit of Power: "We are kept by the mighty power of God;" and then you finish this prayer with what you do not in your heart believe.

"For thine is the kingdom." And you are a subject of Satan's kingdom.

"Thine is the power." You boast of your own strength; and "strong men" are "utterly to fall."

"And thine is the glory." Whereas you are always boasting of yourself, and would in heart give the glory to the devil sooner than God; and you know it.

"For ever and ever." And then you say, "Amen," or so be it, when you wish to see Satan's kingdom, and your own power and glory flourish for ever; and you would never die if you could help it. But God drives you out of this world: "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness." Say you, "That means the openly profane." I say, No. Solomon says, "I saw the wicked buried, that had come and gone from the place of the holy."

But to return to our subject. It will be the delight of your soul, if taught of God, to ascribe all the glory to him; and this is good. "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord and to sing praises to thy name, O thou Most High, to show forth thy loving kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night." To thank him for bringing us out of the world; for showing us our lost estate; for stripping us of our supposed worth and worthiness; for leading us to Christ Jesus; for cleansing us by his blood, and justifying us in his righteousness; for giving us peace; for favouring us with his Holy Spirit, to bear his "witness with our spirits that we are the children of God;" for working faith in our hearts to believe in Jesus; for choosing us in him, and that before the world began. All this, and much more, will spring up in the heart; and this is making melody in the heart to the Lord, and he is well pleased: "For he that offers praise (saith the Lord) glorifies me; and to him that orders his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God."

A sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Lord. It is more pleasing to him than all the sacrifices under the law, "than a bullock that has horns and hoofs." "This," say you, "is the case when every thing goes well." Yes; and though we cannot show forth his loving-kindness every night, yet we can often show his faithfulness in preserving us from ourselves, from various enemies that seek our ruin, from Satan, in not suffering us to be tempted above that we are able; that though low, and the night be dark with us, yet he visits us again, "makes darkness light before us, and many crooked things (both in providence and in spiritual experiences that appear hard and knotty to us) he makes straight:" how he hath delivered, he doth deliver, and in whom we trust he will yet deliver. And this is good: "Let me see thy countenance, and let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice and thy countenance is comely."

We have shown the following things to be good: 1. prayer; 2. to bear the yoke; 3. to wait for salvation; 4. to be afflicted; 5. to communicate; 6. subjection to the higher powers; 7. prayer for men in general; 8. to do good for evil; 9. the fight of faith; 10. to do justice; 11. to hold fast the faithful word; 12. not to stumble the weak; 13. to be zealous and let our light shine before men; and 14. to ascribe the glory of all to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

I come now to treat of "the land." And do not pass over that little word "so." "*So* shalt thou dwell in the land." You have heard from Scripture what doing good, as also what trusting in the Lord is. Then mind: "So shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

Now for "the land." And 1. The land we shall dwell in is where the gospel is faithfully preached; and there we are to abide, and not run away from the glorious gospel, let the times be never so hard; for if even a famine were to come on, what is that compared to a famine of hearing the word? Suppose we have the worst prospects where we dwell, and by leaving the land to go to another, we had, according to reason, the brightest, yet enjoying the gospel there we are to abide, trusting to the faithful promises: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee;" "In the days of famine thou shalt be satisfied." "And truly," says the apostle, "if they had been mindful of the country whence they came, they had opportunity to return, but now they desire a better country." God has been pleased to bring us out of the land of Egypt, from under the tyranny of Pharaoh, (the devil,) and has fed us with the bread of life, the water of life, and the fatted calf, and we have drunk of that river the streams whereof have often made us glad. We must not expect much temporal prosperity; but having "food and raiment, learn to be therewith content."

After the children of Israel were brought out of the land of Egypt, they must be forty years in the wilderness to prove them; and they were for running away; but God was teaching them to live by faith. Moses was like a king over them, and every thing he cried to God for he got. Now, we are in the wilderness, and though we, like them, have often complained, yet there has been no

ground for our complaints. And who can say, with truth on their side, they ever saw the righteous forsaken or his seed begging bread? Why, none can.

We are to remember that this is not our rest; it is polluted, and therefore our eyes and our hearts must go higher. And that brings me to another land, of which Canaan was a type, and they were to enjoy it after they had gone through the wilderness. And this land you have as follows: "He shall dwell on high;" that is, he shall enjoy my salvation; "Let thy salvation set me on high;" "His place of defence shall be the munition (or strength) of rocks." This is Christ Jesus, whom Peter confessed, and the church is built on. "Bread shall be given;" "The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world;" "I am the bread of life;" "His water shall be sure;" "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." "But this spake he of the Spirit," therefore this water is the Spirit. It "shall be sure;" "I will never take it from his seed, nor his seed's seed, from henceforth and for ever;" "My mercy I will not take from David as I did from Saul;" and this mercy is the Holy Ghost, which Saul had as a prophet, but never to regenerate him, as David had. "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty." And how often have we seen him! And how precious has he been to us, so that we could say, "He is altogether lovely!" When thousands can see neither form nor comeliness in him, but despise and reject him, we can see a beauty in his righteousness. Salvation, grace, humility, and a meek and quiet spirit, this is a beautiful dress, and we receive ours from him. "Put on thy beautiful garments." At the right hand stood the queen in gold of Ophir; she is to be brought to him in raiment of needlework—the peace that he made by the blood of his cross, which is our beauty that we receive from him: "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter!"

And then it is said, "Thou shalt behold the land that is very far off;" and in this land the promise will have its full accomplishment. The thousand years' reign, where we shall inherit the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. After which will come eternal glory, and so shall we be ever with the Lord. "We shall hunger no more." No; "verily we shall be fed." But what is our food? Why, the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God. And what is it but Christ who is our life? And what is to be our drink? "Fountains of living water." Now, here we have but a taste, but there there shall be no want. This is a land "flowing with milk and honey."

Now, do not think to get here in any other way than by trusting in the Lord, for he says, "I am the way," and there is no other: and mind, "So shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily," (an oath that Christ makes use of in Scripture,)—beyond all doubt, for the words of his mouth and the thoughts of his heart stand fast to a thousand generations—"thou"—thou that now trustest in me, when according to reason it appears a vain thing, nevertheless, "thou shalt be fed."

And thus, in my feeble way, I have largely shown what it is to "trust in the Lord;" then, in fourteen particulars, what is meant by "doing good;" "the land" I have shown literally, and that that is the best where the pure gospel is preached, and where we are to dwell; likewise, the thousand years' reign, called the new earth; and, lastly, endless glory. What is right, the Lord bless; and what is amiss, the Lord forgive! And to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be all the glory of every mercy! Amen and amen.

MEMOIR OF THE LATE J. HIRST.

To the Editors of the GOSPEL STANDARD.

Dear Friends,—In the Memoir of the late William Gadsby mention is made of a minister at Bacup, in Lancashire, named Hirst. Having lately met with an account of the life of this man, I have made the following extracts, which, if they meet with your approval, I should like to see inserted in your magazine. I have reason to know that Mr. Gadsby believed Mr. Hirst to be a good man. It is true that he was mixed up with the Baptist association of his day, but though he was *amongst* them he certainly was not of them, nor had they, as a body, then sunk so low as they have now. His experience condemns their duty-faith scheme.

The Memoir was compiled by a Baptist minister, named Hargreaves, who subsequently removed to Waltham Abbey. It is to be regretted that it was not compiled by one who had a little more of Hirst's honesty in his heart, for then a more full account would have been given of Hirst's latter days, as to the dealings of God with his soul; whereas, it appears that this part of Hirst's manuscript has been almost wholly suppressed. Indeed, I learn from a friend at Rochdale, who knew the parties well, that not only was the latter part of Hirst's manuscript omitted from the printed book, but that, acting under the advice of two influential ministers in the Yorkshire and Lancashire Baptist Association, some portions of even the earlier part, in which Hirst gave a more detailed and faithful account of his abandoned and awfully licentious life, were also omitted. When the late William Gadsby heard of the circumstance, he said, "Why, these men are so *pious* that they seem to be afraid it should be known that God saves sinners."

Had Hirst's own account been faithfully recorded, it would have explained many sentences which now seem somewhat ambiguous, especially as to his objections to marriage.

I am, yours respectfully,

A FRIEND.

In a MS. Mr. Hirst observes, "My mother was poor, but she took much care of me, and I loved her dearly. She sent me early to school to learn to read, and I have heard her say that I had read the Bible through before I was five years old."

He frequently spent his evenings with Mrs. S. Hopwood, who lived next door to his mother. She appears to have been a serious woman, of the old Presbyterian school. She was afflicted with blindness before she died, and the mother of Mr. Hirst waited on her towards the close of life. "This old woman," observes Mr. Hirst, "was very fond of me, and taught me to repeat many of the hymns of Dr. Watts. She affectionately charged me to avoid swearing and lying, and I bless God I could never take pleasure in either.

"If at any time I transgressed in either, my conscience was deeply wounded. I loved the church, and, though very young, was able to find the service of the day before I went from home. When my conscience accused me of sin I wept in secret, and read over the Litany of the prayer-book for hours together. From seven to thirteen years of age, I was often greatly affected with thoughts concerning the knowledge and power of God. When I looked at the sky I conceived of it as the hand of God, and said to my play-fellows, 'See that hand! How soon and how easily it would kill us all!' I remember one time, while playing with my companions in the summer when it was very hot, that I was strongly tempted to curse the sun. The sorrow I felt for this, for a long time after, I am unable to express. Even now, though nearly seventy years have elapsed, my soul trembles while I am writing the account.

"On another occasion, being sporting with my companions, I happened to swear, and, instead of reproof, I met with applause. This stirred up the wickedness of my nature to such a degree that I began to swear vehemently. Instead of instantly striking me dead, and plunging me into hell, as I justly deserved for my conduct, God was pleased in rich mercy to stop my mouth with shame and deep remorse. I went home with horror of mind, and began to sink into awful despair. When I retired to bed I prayed earnestly for pardon of my sins. In a little time I became easy again.

"When I was about twenty-one years of age, I began to think that God would bring upon me some awful judgment, being fully persuaded that he ruled the world, and disposed of every event according to his own sovereign will. I dreaded the idea of matrimony, from a principle of jealousy respecting the honesty of females. I feared also that if I married, God would give me some wicked creature for a companion, as a plague and a curse to me, for the wickedness of which I was conscious. This troubled me very much, and brought me often to my knees to pray for the pardon of my sin, and that, if marriage was appointed for me, God would give me a religious partner. This was rather remarkable, as religion (I speak it to my shame) was become too much the object of my sport.

"How could I expect that a serious wife would be anything but a torment to me? But I had, as thousands of sinners in similar circumstances have, an inward monitor which informed me

that religion was the 'one thing needful.' I therefore paid my addresses to a young woman of a respectable family and of an unblemished character. She encouraged my addresses, but reprobated my general conduct. She often reasoned with me on the impropriety of my conversation, and cordially wished my reformation. She lent me a book called *The Practice of Piety*, to which I paid some attention.

"The writer lays open the state of the wicked in life, in death, and after death. I read the sinner's life, and found it the picture of my own. Here I was tempted to lay the book aside, believing that death after such a life would be miserable. However I proceeded, and found the death of a wicked man described as awfully miserable indeed, and was constrained to believe it was verily true. I was fearful it would be my eternal portion. We continued to keep company till I believe our affections were mutually fixed. Notwithstanding this I could not reconcile my mind to the idea of marriage. I was at times greatly agitated. I trembled, I wept, I prayed for pardon and direction; but I was still disinclined to marry. In my twenty-third year I formed a resolution to leave that part of the country, and having a sister in Somersetshire, I determined to go thither.

"While ruminating on my journey I had an uneasy mind. One morning in May, 1759, I awoke, perhaps about two o'clock, and beginning to reflect on my situation, I appeared to myself the most wretched of the children of men. Such horror and fear seized upon me, that I was obliged to rise and walk backwards and forwards in the room. No longer able to endure my distress, I sought relief by change of place. I left my chamber and went into a back yard belonging to the house. Looking up, I perceived the sky to be cloudy, and believed the very heavens were clothed with vengeance against me. As I returned to my room my heart sank within me, and my body shook with a universal tremor. I began to feel a kind of distraction come upon me. This brought me to my knees in earnest prayer that God would mercifully spare my reason. While I was upon my knees this thought was strongly impressed upon my mind, 'God can save,' from which consideration I experienced a degree of present relief. I returned to bed, but still felt inclined to refuse marriage and to go to my sister. Accordingly, in a few days after this I prepared for my journey, and actually set off. But God, who is rich in mercy, did not abandon me to my purpose. Sinful as I was, I may truly say that he took me under his special care, and watched over me with a parental eye.

" 'Wonders of grace to God belong:
Repeat his mercies in your song.'

"I took my leave of the neighbourhood of Bury, in Lancashire, early one Monday morning, and reached Stretford, three miles from Manchester, to breakfast. I there met with a gentleman who inquired where I was going; I informed him, upon which he asked me if I could use a pen, and if I understood anything of

numbers. I answered in the affirmative, and gave him a specimen: 'Well, young man,' said he, 'your way is through Bristol. I am well acquainted with an innkeeper there who wants a drawer, and, if you please, I will recommend you to his attention.' He, with my consent, immediately drew up a few lines in my favour, for which I thanked him, and began to pursue my journey. I arrived at Newport, in Shropshire, on Tuesday night.

"After supper I took a walk to the bowling-green, to watch the gentlemen at their sport. I had not been long here when the mistress of the house sent me an invitation to sit with her. She received me kindly, and, in the course of conversation, asked me whither I was going. On being informed, she told me if I could get to Bridgenorth before ten o'clock next morning, I might take the boat to Bristol, and if I chose she would order the servant to get my breakfast, and call me in proper time. I accepted the proposal with gratitude, and reached Bridgenorth accordingly, about half-past nine o'clock on the Wednesday morning.

"When I came to the boat-house I was informed the boat had sailed a few minutes before. Providence now began to thwart my purposes, baffle my schemes, and hedge up my way. Here I began to learn that 'many devices are in a man's heart, nevertheless, the counsel of God, that shall stand.' Wonders of grace and mercy began now to be displayed towards a poor sinner. I said I understood the boat did not sail till ten o'clock, and was informed that such was the usual hour of sailing, nor did they recollect that it had ever gone sooner than ten, excepting that morning, and what was the reason of the change they knew not. They advised me to go to the mile-house below the town, where the boatmen always called, and there I might be taken in. I went, and was there before the boat. The house was kept by an old woman, who I have great reason to believe was a Christian. Here I waited till I began to fear the boatmen would not call. The mistress of the house said that I need not indulge any apprehension, for they never passed her door without calling. 'Young man,' said she, 'where are you going?' I replied, 'To see a sister of mine, in Somersetshire.' She, looking steadfastly upon me, said, 'I fear you have left some young woman in sorrow.'

"I did not confess, and I durst not deny, but insisted that I was going to see my sister. 'That may be true,' says she, 'and yet you be guilty; and if you are, you may depend upon it that vengeance will pursue you.' This struck me powerfully, but did not drive me from my purpose. The boatmen not calling, I desired the servant might be sent to the river, to inquire after them. She presently returned, saying, 'The men will not call, nor will they take another passenger.' The mistress arose from her seat, and with uplifted hands expressed the greatest surprise. 'I have kept this house,' says she, 'for twenty years, and these men have never before this passed my door without calling; nor did I ever know them refuse a passenger before. Surely, young man, this is on your account, though they know it not; God is

pursuing you to turn you back. If you dare to proceed, the press* being at this time exceedingly hot at Bristol, you will most assuredly be taken. But if you will return, and ease the pained heart which mourns your flight, you shall be welcome to bed and board here until to-morrow.' I was struck dumb with surprise—I knew not what to say. 'God,' thought I, 'is pursuing me, stopping up my way, and seems determined, if I persist, to follow me with a rod.' I paused some time, and then said, 'Madam, I feel much obliged to you for your kindness to a stranger, and I will follow your advice.' She appeared exceedingly glad, and, while I stayed, behaved towards me with the kindness of a mother.

"In the morning I rose early and returned God thanks for his care of me, and for the kindness he inclined others to show towards me. The mistress and her servant arose, provided for me an excellent breakfast, and loaded me with provisions which served me all the way home. I would gladly have paid my reckoning, but she would not suffer me to pay a farthing, nor even to give anything to the servant maid. Such unexpected friendship overwhelmed me, and we could not part without tears from us both. As I was departing from her, having bid and received an affectionate farewell, she said, 'If you would wish to see a little more of the country, call upon Mr. Sing, in Bridgenorth, who is now in his hay harvest; give my compliments to him, and tell him it will much oblige me if he would employ you a few days, and I have no doubt that he will if he can with convenience.' I went accordingly, met with the gentleman, and delivered my message; but he said, 'Young man, you see the weather is gloomy, and I have plenty of hands, or for the sake of Mrs. — I would gladly employ you.' This gentleman, I have since learned, was a member of a Baptist church. I was not urgent to stay, wanting now to be at home again, where I arrived on the Friday night. My mind being now settled as to the path I ought to take, I sent for my companion, and we fixed on the time, and place, and manner of our marriage, which was attended to accordingly. This was in June, 1759.

"Being married, I now resolved upon a full reformation of my conduct; but, alas! I knew not anything of the way of eternal life. As I felt I had lost the favour of God by my disobedience, I foolishly hoped that, by returning to my duty, I should gain his favour.

"About three weeks after my marriage, a gentleman with whom I had had some acquaintance in the time of my folly, having begun business in Manchester, sent for me to engage me to become an assistant in his warehouse. I and my wife removed to Manchester, and I now began religion in my family, and read a form of prayer morning and evening. I attempted to reform my conduct completely, and, as to external appearance, I in a great measure succeeded. But in spite of all I could do, I kept

* The pressing of men for sailors during the war.

beholding more and more of my inward sinfulness, and perceived that my best works were far short of perfection. I now set about fasting and praying in private, which I endeavoured as much as possible to conceal from my wife. Still I appeared to myself to get worse and worse. I felt such evils in my heart that I concluded my case to be singular, and that no man surely ever felt as I did. I endeavoured to remove my burden and to subdue the iniquities of my heart by watchfulness and devotion, but all my labour was ineffectual. I had a great desire to receive the sacrament, yet I durst not, fearing an inquiry would be made into my character and whether I was fit to receive it, being conscious I had no qualifications to recommend me. But this fear was at length removed by an old communicant, who informed me there was no examination. I now ventured to approach the table of the Lord, according to the rules of the Established Church. For nearly two years I received the outward elements of bread and wine almost every Lord's day, either in the Collegiate church, where I usually attended, or in some other church in Manchester. But with all my prayer, fasting, and communicating, I still obtained no hope of salvation. My sins kept appearing blacker, and my heart viler than before. One Lord's day in the interval, at noon, I took a walk with a neighbour, purposing to attend public worship at a chapel out of town. But in our walk we trifled away the time, so that when we arrived we were too late and ashamed to go in, and we returned without hearing the service.

“ My soul was now wounded to death. Guilt and condemnation stared me in the face. I knew not what to do, nor where to go, and yet I durst not mention my feelings to my friend. I arrived at home nearly in a state of distraction. After family prayer was over in the evening, we prepared for bed. While my wife was undressing, I threw myself upon the bed, in a fit of black despair. But while I was musing on my misery, and indulging fearful and awful apprehensions respecting futurity, I thought I heard as if a voice had spoken in my ear, ‘ God, for his mercy's sake, has pardoned all thy sin.’ I lay awhile in wonder and fixed astonishment, not knowing how this could be. I could not prevent nor remove the impression, though I attempted. I believed my sin was pardoned, and began to rejoice with joy unspeakable. This happy frame continued with me in some degree for several days; but for want of a knowledge of the plan of salvation by grace, through the redemption of Christ Jesus, in a little time all vanished away as a dream, and I sank again into the pit of despondency. All the hope I now had left was that God, to whom all things are possible, could forgive me; but how, in a way of righteousness, I could not tell. This hope, however, kept me from entire despair, and urged me on in the way of religion, according to the best of my knowledge. In this frame of mind, with some little variations at times, I continued while in Manchester.

(To be continued.)

PERFECT LOVE CASTETH OUT FEAR.

Dear Editors,—Having been requested by several friends to forward you an account of my dear child's death, I do so; and if you think it worthy of a place in the *Gospel Standard*, you will oblige

M. G.

“December 6th, 1846.

“One Saturday morning, in the autumn of 1839, while at school, a remarkably solemn frame of mind came over me. I felt as I never felt before. I was impressed that something would happen, or some calamity would befall me, but what I could not tell.

“The same morning, as I was walking home from school with some of the school children, it seemed to me as if a solemn and awful voice uttered the following verse:

“‘See the leaves around us falling,
Dry and wither'd, to the ground;
Thus to thoughtless mortals calling,
With a sad and solemn sound.’

“I looked around to see who had spoken it. I saw no one but the children, their countenances looking as unconcerned as before; and as I was convinced they had not spoken nor heard the voice, concluded that it was my conscience.

“These texts followed: ‘We are all born in sin and shapen in iniquity;’ ‘All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.’ And instantly my vileness as a sinner before God from my birth was brought to my view.

“‘We all do fade as a leaf,’ came to my mind. Yes, though I and my body will soon decay and perish, as these leaves I am now walking on, what will become of my never-dying soul? How shall I appear before the just and holy God against whom I have sinned, for the spirit returns to God who gave it? I saw God would have been just had he instantly cut me off and sent me where hope can never come. I felt myself entirely helpless, and was afraid God would never pardon my sins; but that was what I wanted. I knew that unless it was God's pleasure, as an act of his rich, free, and sovereign mercy, to pardon my numerous transgressions, I should be lost to all eternity.

“When I came home I went up stairs, and shut myself in my room; and having found the hymn the verse was in, I read it, and found the last verse to be as follows:

“‘On the tree of life eternal,
Man, let all thy hopes be stayed;
Which alone, for ever vernal,
Bears a leaf that ne'er shall fade.’

“I thought this ‘tree of life eternal’ was Jesus Christ. I knelt down and confessed my vile sinfulness to God, and begged him to accept me, that I might be accepted in his beloved Son, ‘in whom he was well pleased;’ and that if it was not his blessed will to

answer me, not to let the circumstance fade from his view; and if that was not a call from his Holy Spirit, that he would give me a real one, and make me a leaf that should never fade.

“I then took up the Bible, thinking I would read the first chapter I opened at, and see if I could find anything suitable to my case. The chapter I first opened upon was Isaiah lv.: ‘Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.’ I felt the chapter suitable, but my earnest desire was for God

“‘To assure my conscience of her part,
In the Redeemer’s blood;
And bear his witness with my heart,
That I was born of God.’

“From this time forward, for more than six years, I often cried to the Lord for deliverance from the burden of my sins. Once, while begging for deliverance, the words, “You hath he quickened,” were applied to my mind with some degree of comfort. I hoped God had begun the work. I knew that if he had begun it he would perform it, and that I should be delivered in his own time, which led me to cry more earnestly. It has since pleased my Heavenly Father, in whom all fulness dwells, that I should experience that “hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.” And if for a time I seemed less anxious about it, it was soon laid with weight upon my mind. Often did I repeat these and such like verses:

“‘Dear Lord! remember me,
A sinner weak and vile;
Fall of impiety,
And fraught with sin and guile.
I cannot hope but in thy blood,
Remember me, O Lord, for good!’

“‘A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On thy kind arms I fall;
Be thou my strength and righteousness,
My Jesus and my All.’

“Many times from the feeling of my breast have I repeated these hymns:

“‘Gracious Lord, incline thy ear;
My requests vouchsafe to hear.’

“‘Rock of Ages, shelter me.’

“‘Jesus, Lover of my soul.’

“‘Show me some token, Lord, for good!’

“Sometimes while supplicating for mercy I have in some measure been favoured with faith and love. I could say, ‘I will not let thee go, except thou bless me;’ ‘Thou art the Chiefest among ten thousand, and the Altogether Lovely.’ ‘Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth I desire beside thee.’ At such times as these, I was stripped of everything below the skies. I

could see that God was the centre, source, and sum of bliss; but I wanted to know, if I was interested in his love, that Christ had shed his precious blood for me; and nothing could satisfy me but being told from God's own mouth that he had chosen *me*.

"For two or three years I had enjoyed but very poor health. At the time the Lord was pleased to deliver me I was confined to my bed for six weeks. When first taken worse, I thought I should die, but this text was applied to my mind: 'This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God.' I then thought I should not die, but could not tell what further it meant. A week or two after, I awoke early one morning, and these words were immediately applied with great power to me: 'Your life is hid with Christ in God;' (Col. iii. 3;) and such light, life, joy, love, liberty, and pardoning mercy entered, that I cannot describe it. I exclaimed, 'Yes, my life is hid with Christ in God! O sweet and safe hiding place!' I searched for my sins, but could not find them. The precious blood of my Saviour had concealed them. God looked at me through his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased. I was accepted in the Beloved. I could say, 'Mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.' This happy state of mind was uninterrupted for some hours, when the thought passed across my mind that I was too insignificant for the great God to notice, therefore the comfort could not be from him; but before I had time enough to think of it, these words came with much power: 'He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.' (Isaiah liii. 11.) My peace returned. I could see it was the tempter trying to steal my comfort, but God would not permit him. I had much enjoyment in the Lord the whole of the day. In the evening I felt much my unworthiness of the Lord's rich mercy and favour to my soul. I told him I was black. He answered me, 'Thou art black, but comely: comely through my comeliness, which I have put upon thee.' (Solomon's Song i. 5.)

"It was nearly twelve months before I told any person about my deliverance. I thought I would never speak about it, and that I should go to heaven all the same. But I have since experienced that it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure. One Sabbath afternoon I was melted under a sense of God's great love to me, and my conscience condemned me to think that I did not speak well of his name, but spoke of anything except the 'one thing needful,' when that was uppermost in my heart. With these thoughts I took my Bible and opened on these words: 'Are the consolations of God small with thee? Is there any secret thing with thee? Why doth thine heart carry thee away? and what do the eyes wink at, that thou turnest thy spirit against God, and lettest such words go out of thy mouth?' (Job xv. 11—13.) I took it as a suitable reproof to me, read the whole of the chapter, and felt myself nothing, and less than nothing, before the all-conquering Jehovah. In the evening my mother was speaking of the goodness of God to such unworthy

creatures. I felt the same, and I told her of my deliverance. A little time after this verse followed my mind :

“ ‘ In all my Lord's appointed ways,
His journey I pursue;
Hinder me not, ye much loved saints,
For I must go with you.’ ”

“ I thought it meant baptism. Once while meditating about baptism, this scripture was applied to my mind: ‘ When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.’ (Isaiah xliii. 2.) I thought it was a call from God; and if I did not pass through the water, God would not be with me in it. I knew he had said, ‘ If ye walk contrary to me, I will walk contrary to you;’ and I thought he would punish me if I disobeyed his commands. I was very weak in bodily health at the time I went before the church. I felt much about going. I knew I could not speak, unless he was pleased to open my lips; and I begged him to do so, that my mouth might show forth his praise. About two hours before I went, God was pleased to comfort me with this text: ‘ I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.’ (Isaiah xli. 10.) Although, according to God's gracious promise to me, all needful strength was bestowed, I was afterwards tempted to think what a fool I was for going. I was relieved by the application of these words: “ The wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein.” (Isaiah xxxv. 8.) A few days after, the following verse was applied to me in a very striking way :

“ ‘ My Captain sounds the alarm of war—
Awake! the powers of hell are near!
‘ To arms, to arms!’ I hear him cry,
‘ ‘Tis yours to conquer or to die!’ ”

Also, ‘ Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.’ (1 Peter iv. 12.) I found I was tried as I never was before. The Lord took from me a measure of the light of his countenance, and I feared he would leave me entirely. ‘ He hid his face from me, and I was troubled.’ Instead of this I wanted him to shine brighter, to support me in going through the solemn ordinance of baptism. O how I begged of him not to leave me! This text was some relief to me: ‘ I have laid help upon One that is mighty.’ (Psalm lxxxix. 19.) But I soon sank again.

“ For days I begged for a clear deliverance, and a week before the baptizing the following text was applied to me with much power and peace: ‘ I will be unto thee a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of thee.’ (Zech. ii. 5.) Afterwards I could not sink so low; still my hope was in God, and my expectation was from him, nor did he disappoint me.

“ Early on the baptizing morning I received much comfort from the application of this text: ‘ But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as

eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.' (Isaiah xl 31.) And I enjoyed the light of my Heavenly Father's countenance the greater part of that day."

The deceased was a reader of the *Standard*, and had many soul-refreshing seasons from it. She wrote the foregoing account of a portion of her experience six weeks before her death. I am not in sorrow as those without hope, for my loss is her eternal gain.

For more than six years she suffered much from a complaint at the heart, and bore it with great resignation; and when in great pain enjoyed much of the Lord's presence, and oftentimes said, "How good the Lord is! It is from a Father's hand; it must be right, it cannot be wrong; for in his love he hath afflicted me." This made it a pleasure to be with her. She wished, if it were the Lord's will, not to be restored again; but feeling a little better, was afraid she should, when these words were applied to her mind: "Take no thought for the morrow." She said, "Mother, my will is lost in God's will since these words have been applied." From August 2nd her weakness increased greatly, and at times she was in much pain.

A short time before her death she said, "Mother, I have been desiring the Lord to favour me not to be in pain when I am dying, and the Lord answered me with these words: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace;" and my end will be peace. On Lord's day, September 12, she said, "Mother, I am now going home to my Father and to your Father; to my God and your God." Some friends called in to see her the same day, and with a pleasing countenance she said to them, "I only waited six years for the sealing of the Spirit; what a short time to wait for such a prize! I many times feared I never should obtain it. The man at the pool waited thirty and eight years."

On the 13th she said, "I think I shall soon go, for the Lord applied these words to my mind: 'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.' How I think of the blessed Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane! he never moved from pain. 'Of him, and through him, and to him are all things; to whom be glory for ever.' 'Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.'" I said to her, "You seem to have the water." She said, "I have." On the 14th I said, "My dear, you have not one thing to disturb you." She said, "Yes, I have one thing, and that is my depravity. Although it is done away, yet I feel it; I am one piece of depravity." I asked her to have the juice of a grape. She said, "No; I want the juice of the kingdom."

The next morning I perceived a change, and told her so. She said, "I am beautiful, beautiful! victory, victory!" I asked her, "Do you think you will come off victorious?" She exclaimed, "I shall come off victorious. I love my Jehovah Jesus best of all." Her countenance spoke the peace of her mind through the day; and in answer to her desire, her last day was one of her best. At one

o'clock she said, with composure, peace, tranquillity, and calmness of mind, "I am dying. I have no waves nor billows; the Lord will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on him. For me to live is Christ, but to die is gain."

About six o'clock a friend came in, and she said, "I am in no pain; how kind the Lord is to me!" And at half-past seven she leaned forward and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit! Glory, glory, glory!"

"Vital spark of heavenly flame,
Quit, O quit this mortal frame."

And then

"Rock of Ages shelter me."

When her breath was almost gone, I said,

"Let me hide myself in thee."

She answered,

"Let the water and the blood,"

and so went through the hymn; and looking at me, said, "I am going home. Don't move, or you will not see the last of me." Then leaning back, she breathed her last, on Wednesday, September 15, 1847, at eight o'clock in the evening, aged 20.

T—.

M. G.

A SURE FOUNDATION.

Dear Brother in the path of tribulation,—Vain are the works of mortals in matters of salvation. This I hope I have been taught feelingly, and am truly thankful for it. All that have tried their own strength and have found it to be perfect weakness, will be glad of an almighty arm to bear them up. We never know our own poverty better than when we are brought into such spots in our feelings as not to be able to produce one evidence that we are amongst the Lord's family; and this is trying work, at least it is to me. Men may tell me to believe, and say I ought to believe, and it is my duty to believe; why, that is just what I want to do, but I cannot, only as the Lord is pleased to draw forth faith into exercise; and then I want no man to tell me to believe. I can then believe in Christ as my Friend, and Saviour from all my sins and from the justice of God, through his sufferings and death on the accursed tree. And this I find to be a sure foundation. It has never deceived a poor sinner yet, and it never will while the world stands. The faith of God's elect stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God; and I am glad that it is so, that God may have all the glory. If it were in the power of mortals to believe when they pleased, they would never know and feel the power of those texts: "Thou, Lord, hast wrought all our works in us;" "For it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure."

O! how sweet it is, when we can say from our hearts and souls, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength!" Yes, when

blood and righteousness appear, and when we have a solemn view of the way in which the Lord has led us, we can then say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

Dear friend, a dead religion will not do for a poor sinner that knows the plague of his own heart. Men may tell him that there is the word of God to go by, and that he ought to lay hold of it, but it fits him better when the word lays hold of him. As one of old said, "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart." It is sweet work when the Lord breaks in and sets our souls at liberty, so that we can feelingly love him, and his people, and his precious doctrines. And although we are sitting in darkness and sorrow by far the greater part of our lives, yet, bless his dear name, when his truth drops as the rain into our hearts, how it revives us, enabling us to "run and not be weary, to walk and not faint," under the power of the Holy Ghost leading us to feel a little of the everlasting love and mercy of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, towards us. But when God does not draw us, we cannot run.

May God of his mercy grant that we may enjoy more of his heart-cheering presence, and his soul-supporting, world-overcoming, sin-destroying, Christ-exalting, God-glorifying truth.

I shall be glad to hear from you, but do not throw any good time away upon me.

T. C.

BRETHREN, PRAY FOR US.

Dear Brethren, beloved in the Lord,—As my distance from you, and other things connected with this mortal life, prevent me from meeting with you often, I have written these few lines to you as a token of my love to you as the people of God; and it is my desire with the deepest humility and lowliness of mind that I would now address you.

I am a poor sinner. The language of the publican is a prayer that I often offer up, and which I shall never cease to offer up whilst I am in the body: "God be merciful to me a sinner." But, blessed be God, I am a sinner saved by grace. I desire no higher ground than to be sitting at the feet of Jesus—no other character than to be a beggar at a throne of grace, having my heart fixed upon things eternal and divine, blessings that lie far beyond this miserable and perishing world. However faint we may feel at times, it is a mercy to be still pursuing the road to endless bliss. But "we love him because he first loved us." It is because we were one with him from everlasting that he has called us in time; and we shall be glorified with him to all eternity. But this is the ground on which I stand as a sinner saved: I see I was loved in Jesus from all eternity, because I am called to love him now in time; and I must love him through time and eternity, because I am one with him. "I have loved thee," he says, "with an everlasting love." But this

assurance of faith, like all other graces of the Spirit, is the gift of God, and not at our command. It is therefore a glorious privilege, my friends, when we can read our title clear, see all our sins washed away in the Lamb's redeeming blood, and ourselves one with Christ as he is one with the Father. This is what I, through grace divine, feel myself to be; and were I to use any other language, I should dishonour that ever-blessed Spirit who at this moment bears witness with my spirit that I am born of God. But it was through much tribulation and painful experience that my gracious God taught me this knowledge of myself as a sinner, and this knowledge of himself, "whom to know is life eternal."

It is now more than fifteen years since God effectually called me by grace divine, but I have never found the path to heaven an easy one yet. At the first commencement of my spiritual life, the anguish of soul I went through, as well as my persecutions from the world, were past anything I could ever describe to any one; and I sometimes, in looking back upon my past journey, think if I had to go through the same again and could see it all before me, I must die at the sight. But hitherto the Lord has led me, blessed be his holy name. I have had a large family, with much affliction. I have been looked upon with disdain by my superiors, because I cannot, like them, countenance a dead profession of religion. I have been tormented by the devil, that enemy of God and his saints, "who goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," filling my mind sometimes with blasphemous thoughts, sometimes with horrid temptations, and sometimes with infidel doubts. He has hurled his darts at me with almost irresistible force, and has come in like a flood upon me; but the Spirit of the Lord has lifted up a standard against him.

You, my brethren, know, like me, that sin and grace are determined foes; they are so at the beginning of our spiritual life, and ever will be so, till we drop this tabernacle of clay. You, my friends, like me, long to live without sin; but we never can here. It is sin that grieves my soul; oftentimes damps my assurance, darkens my mind, and distresses my conscience. I long for heaven, where I shall sin no more. Instead of the doctrines I hold leading me to trifle with sin, as some vainly talk, they lead me to hate it more and more. I long to honour God more in this crooked and perverse generation. I long to have my conduct and conversation in the world as becometh the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. I long to be, in my family, in the church, and in the world, as one that belongs to Jesus; and, my brethren, however I may fail in this attempt, that God in whose presence I now am knoweth that this is my heart's desire. I daily pray to him to give me grace to do it. I desire to teach my children, as if their salvation depended upon it; to tell them the awful nature of sin, and the awful consequences it leads to; and, as far as they are capable of receiving it, I desire to teach them the truths of the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and earnestly to pray for the blessing of God upon them.

Prayer and communion with God are the Christian's glorious privilege upon earth. I love to see a man much in prayer. These last three years, or more, the Lord has seemed to take a different method of teaching me; to bring me to solemn tests, to deep searchings of heart, hard wrestlings at the throne of grace, and trying me as at the judgment day. Previous to that time, I was looking more at Arminian errors, and the errors of other professing Christians, than into the evils of my own heart; but I saw some, after making a profession of religion a long time, turn to the world again. I saw some of my companions in a sad backsliding state at that time, and myself very far from what I wished to be—"a living epistle of Christ, known and read of all men." But it pleased God to arouse me from this spiritual slumber. It was not till then that I began to pray for you as a church in that affectionate manner I have done since; I speak it to my shame. But God saw fit to suffer me to get into a lukewarm state, and then by trials in providence, and soul troubles, he humbled me at his feet.

"Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer;
Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low, and keep me there."

My bed-chamber is the place, on the Lord's day, where I often find a Bethel for my soul. Sometimes I have had to go to my Redeemer with cries, and groans, and tears; and sometimes, like William Huntington, I could have wished to go on some large common, where no human eye could see me, that I might sing aloud, and praise my Redeemer.

O what must heaven be! In our best enjoyments here we only see through a glass darkly; there we see him face to face. May we always remember whose we are; we are not our own; the Lord Jesus has bought us with his precious blood. May we have grace given us to glorify Him as our all in all. We are but strangers here; the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. May we ever see ourselves as such. My daily prayer for you, my brethren, is, that you may bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, and live in love, peace, and unity, as members of the same family. We are all loved with the same everlasting love, called by the same Spirit, washed in the same blood, clothed in the same white robes, travelling the same road, beset by the same enemies, and we shall all meet at last in heaven, to behold that blessed Redeemer who died on Calvary to atone for our sins. Our Lord says to us, "This is my commandment: that ye love one another as I have loved you."

My friends, let me beg an interest in your prayers. I feel myself a helpless sinner. I need grace divine every moment. And that that God who has called us into the fellowship of his Son here below, may bring us at last to worship him in his glorious seat of bliss above, is the prayer of your unworthy brother in Christ Jesus,

THE ELECTION HATH OBTAINED IT, AND THE REST WERE BLINDED.

It may be asked, what do the elect of God obtain, which "the rest" do not obtain?

I. They obtain from the quickening and enlightening power of God the Holy Ghost, *light to see and life to feel* what sinners they are against a heart-searching God; and being arraigned at the bar of equity in their own consciences, with God in his holy law as their Judge, they find what lost, ruined, miserable, hell-deserving sinners they are. This makes them sometimes wish they had been a beast, a bird, a stone, or anything that has no soul. But God, having begun this work in them, gives them a strong desire to escape damnation and to obtain salvation; but being ignorant of God's plan of salvation, like "the rest," they think of obtaining it by the deeds of the law. In this, however, they are greatly mistaken; for "by the deeds of the law no flesh living can be justified" in the sight of God, "for by the law is the knowledge of sin;" and though an Arminian may get peace by doing his duty, &c., which may stifle his natural convictions, yet the child of God can get none upon that ground, but rather gets worse, for he finds that sin is mixed with all he does, and by a supernatural light he sees that all his best righteousnesses are but as filthy rags; and this brings him to cry out, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He has now obtained such a knowledge of man's helpless, undone state through the Adam-fall transgression, that he feels it is not by might nor power of man, but by the Spirit of the living God. But "the rest" never obtain this knowledge. If they did, we should have no Arminians going about to establish their own righteousness.

II. They obtain from God a *hungering and thirsting after righteousness*, and in his own good time, which is the best time, he blesses them, by faith, with the justifying righteousness of Christ, in which they feel that they are complete in the sight of God, "without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing;" and then they can rejoice in Christ as the Lord their Righteousness. But if the Arminians had ever felt this they would not be going about to establish their own righteousness, and call the imputed righteousness of Christ imputed nonsense.

III. The elect obtain *repentance unto life*, which needeth not to be repented of, by which they are enabled to hate sin and to loathe themselves on account of sin. This is accompanied with a love to holiness, a love to God, his people, and his ways; and by this love they are constrained to follow the Lamb in the ordinances of his house; not expecting to obtain heaven by it; but their language is, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?"

IV. They obtain *faith*, which is the free gift of God, and which enables them to say, "He loved *me* and gave himself for *me*." And this personal application of atoning blood is to him worth a

thousand worlds. But "the rest" never obtain this pledge of particular redemption; hence they contend for universal redemption.

V. The elect obtain *the pardon of their sins and the peace of God in their conscience*, by an application of the atoning blood of Christ.

VI. They obtain *help of God*, whereby they continue unto this day, testifying that salvation is of the Lord; and being beset with enemies—the world, the flesh, and the devil, they are often brought into great tribulation; and "tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience"—an experience of their sinfulness, weakness, poverty, wretchedness, unworthiness of the least of the Lord's mercies, hardness of heart, unbelief, backslidings of heart, and a thousand other evils too numerous to mention. But, on the other hand, they experience God's faithfulness and truth, his loving-kindness and his tender mercies, from day to day, which works in them a good hope through grace, and this hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them. Now these things, put together, imply that the elect are called with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began.

VII. They shall obtain *an inheritance among them that are sanctified*. "For whom God did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son; and whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified." "The rest" may obtain a natural faith, a natural love, a natural hope, a natural joy, a natural peace, and a natural everything; but they are as much inferior to the supernatural graces of the Spirit of God as we are inferior to God himself.

D——, March 18th, 1784.

G. M.

IT SHALL BE WELL WITH THE RIGHTEOUS.

Messrs. Editors,—As the dying testimonies of children of God have often been refreshing to my soul, I feel my mind at liberty to send you the following; and if you think it worthy of a place in the *Standard*, put it in.

It pleased the Lord to begin his work in our sister when very young. Many times, when quite a child, she has often been forced to leave her companions and retire to some secret place, to pour out her soul to God, that he would make her his own child. This spot was in an empty house, in an unfrequented wood.

Being in this spot, she was kept very tender, so that she has often told me she hardly ever told a wilful lie in her life. Here Satan took the advantage, and puffed her up with spiritual pride. She thought she stood as prepared for heaven as any being on the face of the earth.

As she grew up, these things grew with her; but not without many fears as to the ground-work of her religion before God. But the Lord, by little and little, deepened his work in her soul. When in this state, she joined a Baptist church, where I myself was once a member. But as the Lord deepened his work in her soul, she began to see that she was, to use her own words, "amongst the congregation of the dead." And as the work went on, she got more and more dissatisfied, till the Lord brought her out. She then sank very low in soul matters, till she was driven to her wits' end, and for some years was a terror to herself and a burden to all around her. Though she was thought to be such an amiable creature, she now felt herself to be the greatest sinner on the face of the earth. Here we could not agree, and with tears before God we have argued the point. But she would say, "Yours were outward acts of iniquity; but mine were before a holy God, going about to establish my own righteousness, not submitting to the righteousness of God. Depend upon it, my dear friend, this is a stench in God's nostrils worse than all the outward acts of iniquity on the face of the earth—it is an insult to the Majesty of heaven, and I found it to cut me to the very quick—the thought of it even now makes me cry out, "The vilest of the vile!"

She suffered many things in temporals through leaving the above church. As her friends were very well to do, they all turned against her; and, though one of them was a deacon, they have often offered to lend her a hand, and told her she should want for nothing, if she would come back. She said, "No; the Lord brought me out, and I cannot go back, having none to speak to or lean upon." Her cry was to God alone.

One night she dreamed she was in a house where there was a garden walled round, and an arbour, and she was ready to die for want. A dove descended from heaven and put his beak in her mouth, and fed and strengthened her. She awoke. She still continued for two years with many sighs and groans to the Lord to reveal himself to her soul.

At the end of two years, she took a house. And when she saw the garden, she fancied it to be the very house, and garden, and arbour she saw in her dream, being walled round. She used to go and pour out her soul to God in the arbour; and it was in that very arbour the Lord visited her soul with pardoning love and mercy; and the sweet union she felt that day was never altogether lost, through twenty years' hard conflict. She was from that moment, both within and without, a woman decided for truth. She was brought to a point about the profession of the dark and awful day. She sat under Mr. Symons till his death, and the Lord blessed his ministry to her soul in an abundant manner.

About twelve months ago, she broke a blood-vessel, which brought on consumption, which ended in death. During her illness, I and several other friends often visited her, and many sweet and precious times we had in soul communion; and as the Lord was pleased to try her much in temporal troubles, his hand

was often seen in a conspicuous way in answer to prayer. At times she has been brought to sink for the bread that perisheth, and has had such precious faith when kneeling before him, that she has had it as it were before it came. I have known persons, living two miles off, having no rest, and forced to come and help her. They could not resist bringing her something in answer to the prayer of faith.

I saw her two days before her death, and found her in a blessed frame of mind, waiting for him to say, "Come up hither." Not a doubt in her mind; often saying, "Come, Lord Jesus, and take thy poor dust home;" and many precious things she said that quite melted me down. O! how God visits the death-bed of a saint of the Most High, like a shock of corn fully ripe!

But to return. On the Monday, she sank fast, but seemed firm on the Rock. Tuesday, she was much worse, and felt she was going, crying out, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly; why tarriest thou?" She was rather light-headed, at times, through the day. Towards the evening, she altered much—found she was going. Her husband asked her if all was well. She said, "Yes, but he is gone; but he will come again." She again felt his blessed presence, and said, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." She then shook hands with her husband and children, and felt in the agony of death—she was in great pain. Her husband said, "'Tis hard to die, but it will soon be over." "Yes," she said, and exclaimed, "all will be well;" and, I believe, these were the last words she spoke. Her eyes soon after closed, and she fell asleep in Jesus, June 22, 1847, after being confined eleven months and a week. The last seven weeks, she never moved in her bed. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

Yours, in the bonds of love,

Bristol, August 24, 1847.

J. D.

A LETTER BY THE LATE MR. GADSBY.

My dear Friend,—I well recollect receiving a letter from you, and at the time was well pleased with its contents; and now having a few minutes to spare, I sit down to write a line to you; but your letter I cannot now find, so you must not expect this to be a reply to yours.

I hope you are living in the enjoyment of the love and presence of the dear Lord. You know, my friend, that his sweet presence gives joy; and when he withdraws himself, alas! alas! what darkness, deadness, and gloom the poor soul feels! I know well, and you know well, that there is no sweet rest, life, light, and liberty, but in Christ; and there is no getting at this rest, only as the sweet Spirit is pleased to lead us into it. And when the blessed Spirit is graciously pleased to bring a blessed Christ and the conscience together, it is a most blessed fit indeed; for we feel that this sweet Jesus is all we need both for time and eternity.

There is a great deal said by men about simple faith, &c., but the real believer daily feels that he can only believe in Christ spiritually as God the Spirit gives him faith, and draws that faith into exercise. There is a solemn mystery in the work of faith that a carnal professor knows nothing about; and, indeed, God's own people are sometimes very busy in believing, and at the same time have not faith enough to believe that they possess one grain of real faith. They have the full assurance of faith in some branches of divine truth, and all the world could not make them call in question those truths; but at the same time, however fully assured their faith is of the certainty of those truths, they have not sufficient faith to believe in their own faith, but rather conclude that they have no faith at all. Tell such poor souls that God is not a holy, just, righteous, and good God, and that his law is not a holy, just, and good law; tell such poor souls that they do not deserve God's righteous wrath, and that they are not very vile, base, ungodly, sinners; tell them that they have it in their power to repent, to love God, and to deliver themselves from guilt, darkness, and distress; tell them that they may simply believe in Christ, do their duty, and be happy whenever they please; that they have power to keep down their vile, corrupt nature, overcome temptation, raise their thoughts and affections to God, and keep them stayed upon him,—and the poor souls will soon prove that they have the full assurance of faith in those branches of God's word which declare the reverse. Here faith is busy in justifying God, and stopping our mouths before him. It works deeply into those things that cut off all creature hope, and bring us in guilty before God. Soon the blessed Spirit gives us faith in the sufficiency of the Lord Jesus Christ to save our souls consistently with the demands of law and justice; and though a believing view of this truth as a glorious truth of God may prop up the mind a little, real faith must be drawn forth further yet, before the soul can sweetly say, "Behold, God is my salvation!"

It is one thing to believe that God is *salvation*, and that he is *the* blessed salvation of all his spiritual Israel; yea, and to turn to the saints of old, and say God was *their* salvation, and to turn to the saints now, and say God is *your* salvation, or *thy* salvation. All this may be done by faith, and yet the soul be short of real rest. But when the blessed Spirit draws our faith unto Christ, and applies his love and blood to the conscience, then we can in real faith say, "He loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*!" "Behold, the Lord Jehovah is become *my* salvation!"

O! my dear friend, how solemn and sweet it is to be blessed with the Holy Ghost as a Spirit of adoption, and in very deed to call God our Father, and to hold intercourse with him as such; to have the soul drawn out to him, and feel that we are baptized into the love of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; that of a truth we are eternally plunged into the love of a Three-One God. This is a measure of heaven upon earth; here the world drops all its charms, and the Lord is all in all.

I hope the dear Lord grants you many of these soul-ravishing, Christ-exalting, sin-subduing, world-overcoming, Satan-conquering, holiness-producing and maintaining, and God-glorifying love visits.

Give my love to Mr. N., and to your family, and to your brothers, and to mine hosts, and to all the Lord's dear family among you. May the dear Lord lead you all into the deep things of God; and enable you to honour Him who has, in the riches of his grace, conferred such honour upon you, is the prayer of yours in the Lord.

January 15, 1880.

W. GADSBY.

P.S.—The dear Lord has been laying me upon the shelf for a few days. I was very ill, and could not preach the first Lord's day in this month, but through mercy I am much better; and I hope the affliction has been of use to me. Our Lord does nothing in vain. Should I never see Lakenheath again, I believe there are many there that I shall meet in glory. The Lord bless you all. Amen.

ON THE SIN OF UNBELIEF.

This sin may be called the white devil, for it oftentimes, in its mischievous doings in the soul, shows as if it were a little angel of light; yea, it acteth like a counsellor of heaven. Therefore, a little to discourse of this evil disease.

First. It is that sin, above all others, that hath some show of reason in its attempts; for it keeps the soul from Jesus Christ, by pretending its present unfitness and unpreparedness, as a want of more sense of sin, want of more repentance, want of more humility, want of a more broken heart.

Secondly. It is the sin that most suiteth with the conscience. The conscience of the coming sinner tells him that he hath nothing good, that he stands indictable for ten thousand talents, that he is a very ignorant, blind, and hard-hearted sinner, unworthy once to be taken notice of by Jesus Christ; and, "will you," says unbelief, "in such a case as you now are, presume to come to Jesus Christ?"

Thirdly. It is the sin that most suiteth with our sense of feeling. The coming sinner feels the workings of sin, of all manner of sin and wretchedness in his flesh; he also feels the wrath and judgment of God due to sin, and oftentimes staggers under it. "Now," says unbelief, "you may see you have no grace, for that which works in you is corruption. You may also perceive that God doth not love you, because the sense of his wrath abides upon you; therefore, how can you have the face to come to Jesus Christ?"

Fourthly. It is that sin, above all others, that most suiteth the wisdom of our flesh. The wisdom of our flesh thinks it prudent to question awhile, to stand back awhile, to hearken to both sides awhile, and not to be rash, sudden, or unadvised in a too bold or presuming upon Jesus Christ; and this wisdom unbelief falls in with.

Fifthly. It is the sin, above all others, that is continually whispering the soul in the ear with mistrusts of the faithfulness of God in keeping his promise to them that come to Jesus Christ for life. It also suggests mistrusts about Christ's willingness to receive and save it; and no sin can do this so artificially as unbelief.

Sixthly. It is also that sin which is always at hand to enter an objection against this or that promise that by the Spirit of God is brought to our heart to comfort us; and if the poor coming sinner is not aware of it, it will, by some exaction, slight, trick, or cavil, quickly wrest from him the promise again, and he shall have but little benefit of it.

Seventhly. It is that, above all other sins, that weakens our prayers, our faith, our love, our diligence, our hope, and expectations; it even taketh the heart away from God in duty.

Eighthly, and lastly. This sin, as I have said even now, appears in the soul with so many sweet pretences to safety and security, that it is, as it were, counsel sent from heaven, bidding the soul be wise, wary, considerate, well-advised, and to take heed of too rash a venture upon believing. "Be sure first that God loves you; take hold of no promise until you are forced by God unto it; neither be you sure of your salvation; doubt it still, though the testimony of the Lord has been confirmed in you; live not by faith, but by sense; and when you can neither see nor feel, then fear and mistrust, then doubt and question all." This is the counsel of unbelief, which is so covered over with specious pretences, that the wisest Christian can hardly shake off these reasonings.—*Bunyan*.

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

A proud heart and a lofty mountain are never fruitful.—*Gurnall*.

Man lives by death. His natural life is maintained by the death of the creatures, and his spiritual and eternal life are owing to the death of his Saviour.—*Dyer*.

I have rather smoke than fire, and *guessings* rather than *assurances* of Christ's love. I have little or nothing to say, but that I am as one who in his eyes hath found favour.—*Rutherford*.

To exercise mercy is God's great prerogative, an act, not of debt, but of royal bounty, which he exercises when and to whom it seemeth good in his sight. "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," is his high and holy resolve.—*Hervey*.

While Israel marched through the wilderness, the blackest night had a pillar of fire, and the brightest day a pillar of cloud. So in this world, things never go so with God's Israel but they have still something to groan under, nor so ill but they have something to be thankful for. In the church militant, as in the ark of old, there are both a rod and a pot of manna.—*Arrowsmith*.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”—Matt. v. 6.

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”—2 Tim. i. 9.

“The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.”—Rom. xi. 7.

“If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”—Acts vii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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THE RENT VAIL OF THE TEMPLE; OR, ACCESS TO
THE HOLY OF HOLIES BY THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BY RALPH ERSKINE.

“And behold! the vail of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom.” (Matt. xxvii. 51.)

Some here may think, What will the minister make of that text, and what relation hath it to the work of this day? * Indeed, I cannot promise to make any thing of it, unless the Lord himself make something of it: but, with his help, we may find a feast in it to our souls, and a suitable feast on the back of a feast, such as many of you have been celebrating. Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among you this day, and as you have been called to feast upon his passion, so now you are called to feast upon the fruits and effects of it. Have you seen him dying on the cross for you? O! come and see what immediately followed upon his death: “Behold, the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom!” That I may divide the words, and then explain them, you may notice here,

1. The connexion of this verse with what went before, in the particle “And,” intimating the time of this miracle, that it accompanied the death of Christ: “When he had cried with a loud voice, he yielded up the ghost.” This loud cry signified that his death should be public and proclaimed to all the world, as it hath been to you this day; and his “yielding up the ghost” showed that he voluntarily resigned his soul to be an offering for sin, according to his under-

* This sermon was preached after the administration of the ordinance.

taking as our Surety, death being the penalty for the breach of the covenant: "Thou shalt surely die." The Mediator of the new covenant must make atonement by means of death, otherwise no remission. Now he gave up the ghost, and immediately the vail of the temple was rent.

2. You have a note of admiration: "Behold!" intimating what a wonderful thing did immediately ensue. Several miracles, besides the rending of the vail, are here mentioned; but this seems to be the most remarkable. We are told that "the earth did quake, the rocks rent, graves were opened, and many dead bodies of the saints arose;" but that which is put in the first rank of these miracles is, "And the vail of the temple was rent in twain." We find the evangelist Mark mentions this in particular, and names none of the rest of the miracles, as if this rending of the vail were the most to be noticed, as containing somewhat mysterious and significant therein, where we have the very same words: "Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost; and the vail of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom." (Mark xv. 37, 38.) And here it is ushered in with a "Behold!" Turn aside, and see this great sight; be astonished at it. But what are we to wonder at? Then,

3. See the object of admiration; the vail of the temple was rent in twain just as our Lord Jesus expired; that vail of the temple which parted betwixt the holy place and the most holy was rent by an invisible power. In this, and the rest of the miracles, Christ gave testimony to his Godhead, putting forth the power of his divine nature at the same time wherein his human nature, his soul and body, were rent in twain, like the vail of the temple. It is remarkable how the evangelist describes the manner in which the vail of the temple was rent, showing what a full and entire rent it was. Luke says it was rent in the midst; and here Matthew and Mark say it was rent in twain; rent from the top to the bottom, an entire rent. But what was the meaning of all this? What did the rending of the vail signify?

First, It was in conformity to the temple of Christ's body, which was now dissolved. Christ was the true Temple, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." When he cried, and gave up the ghost, and so dissolved and rent the vail of his flesh, the literal temple did, as it were, echo to the cry, and answer the strokes by rending its vail.

Secondly, The rending of the vail of the temple signified the "revealing of the mysteries of the Old Testament." The vail of the temple was for concealment; it was extremely dangerous for any except the high priest to see the furniture of the most holy place within the vail, and he but once a year, with great ceremony, and through a cloud of smoke; all which pointed out the darkness of that dispensation. But now, at the death of Christ, all is laid open; the mysteries are unveiled, so that he that runs may read the meaning of them.

Thirdly, The rending of the vail of the temple signified the

uniting of Jews and Gentiles, by removing the partition wall betwixt them, which was the ceremonial law. Christ by his death repealed it, and cancelled that handwriting of ordinances, nailed it on the cross, and so broke down the middle wall of partition; and by abolishing those institutions and ceremonies by which the Jews were distinguished from all other people, "he abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one new man," (Eph. ii. 14, 15,)—just as two rooms are made one by taking down the partition wall.

Fourthly, The rending of the veil did especially signify the consecrating and opening of a new and living way to God. The veil kept off people from drawing near to the most holy place; but the rending of it signified, that Christ by his death opened a way to God for himself, as our blessed High Priest, and for us in him.

(1.) *For himself*; this was the great day of atonement, wherein the High Priest, not by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, entered once for all into the holy place: in token of which the veil was rent. (Heb. ix. 7—13.) Though Christ did not personally ascend to "the holy place not made with hands," that is, to heaven, till above forty days after; yet he immediately acquired a right to enter, and had a virtual admission. His entrance into the heavenly temple, into the holy of holies, began in his death; having offered his sacrifice in the outer court, the blood of it was to be sprinkled on the mercy-seat within the veil, according to the manner of the priests under the law; but now the legal shadows were all to vanish, the great and true High Priest having by his own blood entered, and so procured

(2.) *For us* an open entrance into the true holy of holies, as the apostle applies it: "We have boldness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil." (Heb. x. 19, 20.) We have now free access to come with boldness to a throne of grace, to a God in Christ. The veil of the temple did so interpose betwixt the people and the most holy place, that they could neither go in nor look into it, but only the priest, in the manner that I said before; but the rending of the veil signified, that the true holy of holies, heaven itself, is now open to us, by the entrance of our great High Priest, that we also may enter in by faith, as a royal priesthood, following our Forerunner, who for us hath entered within the veil. Nothing can obstruct or discourage our access to God in his grace and glory, for the veil is rent.

But now, I am to touch a little at the special mystery here represented: "Behold! the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." (Matt. xxvii. 51.)

OBSERVE. *That Christ, by his death, hath rent the veil which interposed betwixt God and us, and obstructed our access to him.*

He gave up the ghost; and behold! the veil was rent: "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust." Why? "That

he might bring us to God ;" and, in order thereunto, that he might rend the veil of guilt and wrath that interposed betwixt us and him, that he might take away the cherubim and flaming sword, and open a way to the tree of life.

The method wherein I shall speak of this subject shall be to show,

- I. What is that *vail* that interposed betwixt God and us.
- II. How the death of Christ hath *rent* that veil.
- III. In what *manner* the veil is rent.
- IV. For what *end* the veil is rent.
- V. Draw some *inferences* from the whole for application.

* * * * *

I. What is that *vail* that interposed betwixt God and us? Not to speak of the veil of Old Testament shadows and ceremonies, now rent and removed by the death of Christ, there are some veils that, in a special manner, obstructed our access to God; and they may be reduced to these three, the veil of a broken covenant, the veil of God's injured attributes, and the veil of man's sin.

1. The veil of a *broken covenant*, or law of works. The covenant of works, you know, was, "'Do and live,' otherwise you shall die:" "In the day thou eatest, thou shalt surely die." In which covenant, you see, there was a precept, a promise, and a penalty. The precept was *do*, or perfect obedience; the promise was *life*, or eternal happiness upon obedience; and the penalty was *death* and eternal damnation, in case of disobedience. Now, man by his sin hath broken the precept of that covenant, and so forfeited the promise of life, and incurred the penalty of death. If ever we have access to God, this broken precept must be repaired, this forfeited life must be redeemed, this penalty must be executed. Here is a veil that separates betwixt God and us; a veil that neither men nor angels can rend, and yet a veil that must be rent, otherwise we die and perish for ever; and this veil is harder to be rent because of the following, namely,

2. The veil of *God's injured perfections*, particularly his incensed justice and injured holiness. Justice, infinite justice, was a black veil, that obstructed our access to heaven; for God became an angry God, a God filled with fierce wrath against the sinner. God hath set this penalty upon the law, commanding perfect obedience upon pain of death; God's justice was engaged to make this penalty effectual upon man's falling into sin. Nothing can satisfy justice but infinite punishment: "The wages of sin is death;" and God "will by no means clear the guilty." And so, if this veil be not rent by a complete satisfaction, the sinner must go down to the pit. The holiness of God also was injured by the breach of the law: "Sin is a transgression of the law;" a transgression of the precept. Now, as God's justice stands up in defence of the threatening and penalty, so his holiness stands up for the defence of the precept and command of the holy law. God cannot

justify the sinner, nor accept of him as righteous, unless he hath a complete righteousness; not a lame, partial, and imperfect righteousness, but a righteousness every way commensurate to the extensive precept of the law, will satisfy an infinitely holy God. As infinite justice cannot be satisfied without a complete satisfaction, answering to the threatening and penalty of the law, so the infinite holiness of God cannot be satisfied without a perfect obedience, answerable to the precept and command of the law. Now, our natural want of ability to yield satisfaction, and our natural want of perfect conformity to the law, make justice and holiness, and other perfections of God, stand in the way of our salvation, and of our access to heaven, like a veil that can never be rent by us; especially considering that there is

3. A third veil, and that is the veil of *sin on our part*. This is a separating veil betwixt God and us: "Your iniquities have separated betwixt you and your God." (Isa. lix. 2.) Now, before we can get near unto God this veil must be rent, the guilt of sin must be expiated, for "without shedding of blood there is no remission;" the filth of sin must be purged, for "who shall ascend to the hill of the Lord, and stand in his holy place, but he that hath clean hands and a pure heart?" The power of *sin* must be broken. There is, by nature, in us all a power of *ignorance*: our minds are become a dungeon of darkness, and this is such a veil betwixt God and us, that unless it be removed there is no hope of mercy; therefore says the prophet, "It is a people of no understanding; therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them." There is in us a power of *enmity*: "The carnal mind is enmity against God." We are enemies to God by wicked works. This is another veil that must be rent by the arm of Almighty Power; for it is a veil and curtain that the devil hath strongly wrought, like a web, with the warp and weft of pride, carnality, security, and worldliness, and all other wickedness whatsoever, which are but so many threads and pieces of this web, this veil of enmity. There is a power of *unbelief*: that is another veil that on our part stands betwixt us and the holy place, and separates us from divine favour: "He that believeth not is condemned already."

II. The *second* thing, How the death of Christ hath *rent* the veil? When he gave up the ghost, behold the veil was rent!

1. By the death of Christ the veil of a broken covenant was rent in twain, so that we might get to God through the veil of the law; for the law was fulfilled in every part of it, by his obedience to the death. Was the precept of the law a perfect obedience? Well, Christ by his obedience to the death did magnify the law, and make it honourable, and brought in an everlasting righteousness; his death was the finishing stroke, the highest act of that obedience whereby the law was fulfilled. Was the promise of life in the law, or first covenant, forfeited by us? Well, Christ rent this veil, by redeeming the forfeiture with the price of his blood; he bought back the inheritance for us that we had lost, making a purchase of

us, and of eternal salvation for us. Was the penalty of death in the law standing also in the way? Well, Christ comes in the sinner's room, endures this penalty by coming under the curse of the law, becoming obedient to the death, enduring the wrath of God, and delivering us from the wrath to come; and so behold, the veil of a broken covenant was rent.

2. By the death of Christ the veil of God's injured attributes, that stood betwixt God and us, was rent and removed. Christ hath satisfied the justice of God, by offering himself a sacrifice. (Eph. v. 2.) This offering being through the eternal Spirit, it was of infinite worth and value. Here the altar sanctified the gift; the altar was the Godhead of Christ; the offering was made upon the altar of divine nature; and therefore this blood of Christ is called the blood of God. This sacrifice was of infinite worth and value for doing the business of poor man, in atoning justice, and so rending this veil. But now, as Christ hath satisfied the justice of God by enduring the penalty and threatening of the law; so he hath vindicated the holiness of God by fulfilling the precept and command of the law, which he not only did through the whole course of his life, but perfectly finished in his death. Now, if Christ hath fulfilled the law, satisfied the justice, and vindicated the holiness of God, by his obedience to the death, then we may see and say, "Behold the veil was rent!" But,

3. There is the veil of sin on our part; how is this rent by the death of Christ? Why, the Lamb was sacrificed to rend and remove this veil: "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." By his death the guilt of sin is expiated: for "God hath set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins, &c." By his death the filth of sin is purged; for "the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin," and that both meritoriously and efficaciously; for by his death the power of sin also is broken fundamentally, seeing through his death is poured out the Spirit; which actually removes the veil on our part, which he had done fundamentally and virtually on the cross. By this blessed Spirit he rends the veil of darkness and ignorance; "God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, shines into our heart." All the light of nature, reason, education, and human literature cannot rend this veil, till the man receive the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ. By this blessed Spirit he rends the veil of enmity, shedding abroad his love upon the heart; and indeed the view and apprehension of God's mighty love in Christ can alone rend that mighty veil of enmity; for we love him whenever we see that he first loved us. When the soul sees that the God whose majesty he dreaded is now a God in Christ, reconciled to the soul through the sacrifice that Christ offered up, then the soul is reconciled to God, and so the veil of enmity rent in twain. By this blessed Spirit he rends also the veil of unbelief; for, as he is a Spirit of light, to remove the veil of enmity, so he comes into the heart as a Spirit of faith, and removes the veil of unbelief. He begins the rent of humiliation,

when he rends the heart in twain with a sense of sin, and a sight of its undone state; when he makes the soul break with sin; and justify the Lord, though he should damn him for his sin. He then makes the rent of the vail wider by a *gracious manifestation*: "He manifested forth his glory, and his disciples believed on him." Thus he rends the vail of unbelief; and completes the rent of this vail when faith is turned into vision. Thus you see how by his death the vail was rent.

III. The third thing, In what *manner* was the vail rent? All I say on this head shall be in allusion shortly to the rending of the vail of the temple here, which, we see, was in a wonderful manner ushered in with a "Behold!"

1. "Behold! it was rent;" not only drawn aside, but rent. The curtain was not only drawn aside, but torn to pieces, as if God had been displeased at the vail of partition betwixt him and us; angry at the vail of separation, and that there should have been any vail to intercept betwixt him and us. God's heart was set upon a reconciliation betwixt him and us, and therefore his hand tears the curtain that was hanging up betwixt him and us, gave it such a rent, as it might never be whole again. All the devils in hell cannot sew up the rent, so as to disappoint God's design of bringing his people into union and communion with him.

2. Behold! the vail of the temple was not only rent, but rent in twain. The vail that was one was made two, that God and man, who were two, might be made one. It was not half rent, but wholly rent; rent in twain, a full and complete rent; showing that Christ by his death would not be a half Saviour, but a complete Saviour, and the Author of a full and complete salvation, taking entirely out of the way whatever separated betwixt God and us, not leaving so much as a stitch of the curtain to hold the two sides of the vail together. No; the vail was rent in twain. And not only so, but,

3. Behold! the vail was "rent from the top to the bottom." The vail was rent from the top—the highest thing that separated betwixt God and us was rent in twain. We could never have reached up to the top of the vail; yea, the hands and arms of all the men on earth, and angels in heaven, were too short to reach to the infinite justice and holiness of God, that interposed betwixt him and us; the top of this vail, this wall of partition, was higher than heaven. What could we or any other creature do for rending it from the top? But Christ put up his hand, as it were, to the top of the vail, and rent it from the top. The rent begins at the top, but it does not stop here; for

4. The vail is also rent "to the bottom." The bottom of this vail, that did separate betwixt God and us, did reach as deep as the bottom of hell; who could descend to hell for us to rend the vail to the bottom? According to Joannes Seneca upon his death-bed, "We have here," says he, "some that will go to quire for us, some that will play for us, some that will say mass for us, some that will pray for us; but where is there one that will go to hell

for us?" But, O! happy believer, Christ is one that hath gone to hell for you, that he might quench all the flames of hell with his blood, and conquer all the powers of hell that were in the way betwixt you and him. He descended to hell, in a manner, that he might rend the bottom of the vail. But there is yet more here, he not only rends the vail at the top and at the bottom, but

5. "From the top to the bottom" *all* is rent. Both the top and the bottom, and all that is betwixt the top and the bottom; all the impediments betwixt heaven and hell are removed. Though heaven were gained and hell vanquished, yet there might be something in the earth, something in the world betwixt heaven and hell, that might obstruct the passage to the holiest. Well, but the rent is from the top to the bottom; all that comes betwixt the top and the bottom is rent as well as both; so that there is from the lowest misery to the highest happiness a long rent, in a manner, from the top of heaven to the bottom of hell. We fell as low as hell by sin, but Christ by his death hath made an open way from hell to heaven; for, "Behold! the vail was rent in twain from the top to the bottom."

(To be continued.)

SATAN'S POLICY DETECTED, AND HIS CRAFT EXPOSED.—BY JOHN RUSK.

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices."—2 Cor. ii. 11.

There is a set of people in the world that positively say there is no such being in existence as Satan, and that man is never actuated by a devil or devils. But God's family know to the contrary by bitter experience. Now, what I aim at in this little treatise chiefly is, to show that, as God is the fountain of all good, so Satan is the fountain of all evil. I am conscious of my inability for such a work; but is anything too hard for the Lord? What set me at it was this: I awoke early this morning, and the text was on my mind. After I rose I thought of reading Elisha Cole on the *Sovereignty of God*. But while on my knees this text came to my mind: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might;" and as I thought it might be an impulse from God, I was loth to keep back, yet could not see myself fit to undertake such a work. But "power belongeth unto God;" "and in his light we see light." I shall therefore,

I. Notice Satan's beginning.

II. That every man is or has been actuated by Satan, Christ only excepted.

III. Notice Satan's devices, and show the ignorance of every carnal, wicked man, respecting these devices.

IV. Show his attempts to get advantage of the children of God.

V. Show the best way to overcome him. And,

VI. Conclude with a few remarks upon the whole. May the blessed Spirit guide us into all truth.

I. I have to show the *beginning of Satan and of devils*. I shall be brief on this part of our subject. It is plain that once fallen spirits were holy angels, but not elected; and therefore, as not elected, they had nothing to secure their standing. You may say it was pride that cast them down, and you would say rightly. You may say it was rebellion against God, in not obeying his commands to worship Christ in human nature, which is a nature lower than that of angels, as you read, "He was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death." But still he was the God that made them: "For he maketh his angels spirits," and "by him were all things created." (Col. i. 16.) You are right in saying so. It was rebellion.

But you may ask if it was any difference in their nature that caused them to fall rather than the elect angels. I answer, No: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is;" and of course he must have made the angels at the same time. In Gen. i. 31 it is said, "God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good." Mind, "everything." And again, Gen. ii. 1: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." Mind, "the host;" and that "host" means angels is plain from Gen. xxxii. 2: "And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him; and when Jacob saw them he said, This is God's host." But you may say, "Seeing God made them all good, and of the same nature, how came this pride, rebellion, and disobedience into them at first; and where did it come from?" It is not for you and me to pry into such things as these. The Scripture, or God's revealed will, is our rule; and where that is silent, we are to be silent also, and not to be wise above what is written. It never came from God, for he is "holy in all his ways and just in all his works," and "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity." Here let proud reason stop. Thus it is evident that the fall of these angels was in the strictest sense owing to their being left to the freedom of their own will, and to their not being elected.

That some are chosen is plain: "I charge thee before God and the elect angels." Therefore, I humbly conceive, you must fix it in this way: that these angels, not being elected, "kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation." Now, this is the beginning, and we can go no farther back. Thus, from being holy they became unholy, from being humble they became proud, from submissive, rebellious, and from obedient, disobedient; and so they wilfully fell—Satan, I mean, and all the rest of this apostate tribe.

II. Having shown Satan's beginning, let us now show that *every man is, or has been, actuated by him*, Christ only excepted. Adam and Eve, through listening to Satan, ate of the forbidden fruit,

and fell from their original righteousness; thus the curse passed upon them and all their posterity, elect and reprobate. 1. Elect, as Paul says, "By nature children of wrath, even as others." 2. Reprobates: "The tares are the children of the wicked one." Nothing under heaven can alter this. Men may devise schemes and plans as much as they please, yet none can cast out Satan but the Holy Ghost. Satan may walk out, but he returns to his own house.

Let us trace man from his birth to his death, and you will find him actuated by Satan, unless grace prevent. First, his birth, yea, his conception: "Born in sin and shapen in iniquity." Observe, "in sin." But the devil sinned from the beginning. There is the foundation. "He goes astray as soon as born;" and the devils left their habitation from the beginning, for they sinned from that time. Again: not only do they go astray, but they speak lies; and Christ says of Satan that "he was a liar from the beginning."

Again: sometimes while young they rage and storm with passion till they go into fits, as the man's son did that was brought to Christ, when he cured him by casting the devil out. When in youth we read of "youthful lusts," and lust is applied to the devil; "The lusts of your father will ye do, for ye are of your father the devil." Now, all this is plain.

But again: these lusts being felt strong, and leading the young man captive, and he finding it so hurtful to his constitution, this may occasion him to alter his wicked course of life. He therefore gets into a profession of religion, and finds much peace in being so much reformed. But it is the strong man that gets possession of the palace, and Satan's goods, body and soul, are in peace.

Now, the man gets more advanced in years. Nothing comes from his mouth but holiness, for nature is not now so violent in lust; and therefore some say, "Stand by thyself, come not near unto me, I am holier than thou." This is Satan transformed:

The man now gets old, and thinks he is ripening for heaven; but this is a delusion of the devil, for "though his excellency mount up to heaven, and his head reach the clouds, yet he shall perish like his own dung." But how came this to pass? Why, you read that Satan "deceiveth the nations." Satan has deceived the man, and he believes a lie; and though the man thinks he is actuated by his own will, he is not. Paul says they are taken captive by Satan at his will. He sometimes sears the conscience till people are past feeling. As this is the case with worldlings and hypocrites, so with the saints till called by grace, as you may see in Manasseh, a murderer; and Christ says of Satan, "He was a murderer from the beginning." Paul persecuted Christ in his members, as well as Cain, who was of that wicked one. Mary Magdalene was possessed with seven devils, the mad Gadarene with a legion; and if you cannot find out that he has or has had possession of you in any other way, you may by this one thing—unbelief; for he reigns and rules in the children of disobedience, and faith is called obedience. Hence you read of "the obedience of faith." And every man in this world that hates

Zion is of his father the devil. "You have hated both me and my Father"—Christ the King of Zion, and God the founder of Zion. Abel was a citizen of Zion, and Cain was of that wicked one the devil, and hated Abel. Thus it is clear to a demonstration, that elect and reprobate, the one in a state of nature was, and the other altogether is, actuated by the devil. This brings me

III. To notice *Satan's devices*. Though he is cast out as to his reigning power, as considered in Christ or the new man, yet the believer has an old man within that he will work upon. Satan gains ground when the work of God is eclipsed. After the flood God established his covenant with Noah by setting his bow in the cloud. This was God's work. Then comes the devil with his device, which might be thus: "Now you have planted a vineyard; drink heartily of the wine. God will never destroy the world again." So Noah listened to him, and drank till he was drunken. But God's word says, "Be not drunken with wine, wherein is excess." But say you, "What has Satan to do with this about Noah?" Why, lusting after drink is lusting after the cup of devils. (1 Cor. x. 21.) This is a device.

Again: he comes with this cup to Lot, in the hand of each of his daughters, who were both full of the same devil that was in Mary Magdalene; Lot drank, and at the back of that committed incest. This followed God's work in delivering Lot out of Sodom; and this is an unclean spirit, or the spirit of Satan working on Lot's old man. This is another device of Satan.

Again: as he is the father of lies, he tempted Abraham to tell one, which he did in denying his wife; and this was just at the back of his communing with the Lord on behalf of Sodom and Gomorrah. You may see Satan again with Rebekah, in persuading Jacob to subtlety or craft to get the blessing, taking an advantage of his father's eyes. This is the wisdom of the devil. "O! full of all subtlety, thou child of the devil," Paul said to Elymas the sorcerer, when he wanted to turn away the deputy from the faith. Now this was another device.

But again: Isaac says to Esau, "Thy brother came with subtlety, and hath taken away thy blessing." (Gen. xxvii. 35.) Moreover, when God displayed such power by Moses, in bringing his judgments on Pharaoh, you find the magicians confront him; and when Moses stretched out his rod and brought lice, these devil's children owned that it was the finger of God. This was another device.

Again: Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, for offering strange fire; these men declared that Moses and Aaron took too much upon them, for the people were all holy, every one of them. It was such holiness as this that the Pharisees had, which was making clean the outside of the cup or platter; and it came from the devil himself. Thus I might enlarge on his devices, in tempting David to uncleanness and murder, and to number the people; but what do the carnal or wicked know of all this? Why, with respect to

Noah's drinking they would say, "Man ought to enjoy himself and be merry," as you read of the fool in the Gospel, "Soul, take thine ease; eat, drink, and be merry."

Again: when Abraham denied his wife, a carnal man would say, "What harm is that, seeing he might have lost her?" for so far are they from thinking a lie to be a device, that it is said they delight in lies; but God's family are "children that will not lie." By this we are not to understand that it is impossible for them to tell a lie. No; Rahab lied as well as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The old man will be the old man still. But you may take it in a threefold point of light: 1. as considered in Christ Jesus they never told one lie, for He never told one, and his obedience is placed to their account, and lie says, "I am the truth." 2. As partakers of the Holy Ghost, called the Spirit of truth, opposed in old Micaiah to the lying spirit in the false prophets. 3. As having a new man, and considered in the new man, they also "do no iniquity."

Again: carnal men would call it being cunning, crafty, and witty in Jacob getting the blessing; and as for their commending Korah, it is plain they did it from the least to the greatest. Thus are they ignorant of Satan and his devices. But he is not ignorant of them, for he takes them captive at his will; though some of them, as the Sadducees did, deny angels and spirits. But enough of them—let us pass on.

(To be continued.)

MEMOIR OF THE LATE J. HIRST.

(Continued from page 272.)

"My master having taken in two partners, the business now increased very much, and I was sent into the country to superintend a woollen manufactory. This change of residence was in the year 1762. I was now again by Providence brought into the very neighbourhood where my folly had been manifest, and where my old companions in sin resided. My fears were greatly excited lest I should again be drawn into iniquity; for though I had little comfort in religion, yet I durst not relinquish it. God, however, was pleased to preserve me from the paths of the destroyer, and from the snares laid for me by evil men. I kept up a kind of family religion in my house, attending to prayer both morning and evening. I made inquiry, in a distant manner, after serious persons, with a view to discover whether any one entertained such thoughts of himself as I did. In a little time I heard of one of the weavers, who was considered as more religious than his neighbours. I embraced the first opportunity to converse with him. I durst not yet be plain respecting the state of my mind, and therefore our conversation was not very close; however, he soon got to the doctrine of particular election. This was a subject of which I had no knowledge, and our conversation speedily ended. In a

short time after this I saw this man in a state of intoxication, and heard him singing profane songs, an evil of which I had been awfully guilty. I now concluded to talk no more with him on the subject of religion.

“After this, I heard of another of our weavers, who was more serious than men in general are. One Lord's day evening, after the public service was over, I went to spend an hour with him, and to my no small pleasure and surprise, I found him reading to his family, which consisted of a wife and nine or ten children. After reading he kneeled down, and went to prayer without any written form. I was filled with wonder and astonishment, but said very little. From this interview his company became desirable, and I went again in a few days to see and speak with him. I found him labouring with his family, and I sat some time with him. When I came away he accompanied me, and began to tell me what God had done for his soul, and described the manner in which God generally proceeds in working upon the minds of those whom he brings to himself. His account being in many respects so like to my own, I presently laid open the state of my mind to him.

“This was the first time I could ever make so free with any one. When I had informed him what I felt, what I feared, what I had done, and what I expected, he said, ‘John, I fear you are seeking salvation by your own works.’ I answered, ‘To be sure; I know no other way, and yet I feel persuaded that I cannot obtain it in this. I believe God can save me, but in what way, seeing I have broken his holy law, I am at a loss to determine. I am resolved, however, to keep the course in which I am until I can find a better.’

“He then began and preached Christ to me, as Philip did to the inquiring eunuch. He pointed out how Christ came into the world to save sinners, what he had done and suffered in their stead, to accomplish his work and to reconcile sinners to God, who is ever ready to receive and pardon the rebel that approaches him in the name of Jesus. I had read my Bible much, yet I had never before seen these precious truths. But now I saw and believed, and my soul rejoiced in God my Saviour. I can never express, till I arrive in glory, what transports I then experienced. The friend who had been the happy instrument of my joy was dear to me, and my soul clave to him as the soul of Jonathan to David. I inquired what he was, and he informed me that he was a Methodist; and I speedily cast in my lot amongst them. These things happened in the summer of 1762.

“The plan of salvation by Jesus Christ appeared to me so new, so clear, plain, and pleasant, that I doubted not of persuading all with whom I conversed. I therefore, in the first place, applied to my old companions, and informed them what I had found. I pointed out to them how consistent the doctrine was, not only with the Bible, but also with the homilies, articles, and prayer book of the Established Church; setting before them, at the same time, the

danger of their souls while they continued to neglect religion. But alas, alas! I soon found that they wanted ears to hear, and eyes to see, and a heart to understand. Some, indeed, appeared astonished at the change God had wrought in me; but others mocked, saying, 'What will this babbler say?' I then applied to my neighbours, but they would not hear. One had his farm, another his merchandise, and another his family, and so they all wished to be excused. I found I could do nothing for them, but commit them to God in fervent prayer for their salvation.

"Some time after this my joy was turned into mourning. I was assaulted, I suppose by Satan, with three very strong temptations, each of which struck at the very existence of my religion, and indeed of all religion. Whether there was any God or not; if there was any God, whether the Scriptures were his word; and whether I had or had not a soul which must be miserable or happy for ever. I was held in such suspense and distress of mind about these things that I often envied the happiness of brutes. For twelve months I was sorely harassed, and had no true peace day or night.

"None can judge or conceive of my grief and anxiety except those who have experienced the like. Alas! I had lost sight of the source of all my strength and joy. This trouble, however insupportable, did not, blessed be God, prevent my perseverance in religion. I continued in prayer, I can truly say it, both day and night. After some time God was pleased to convince me of his existence, and of his eternal power and Godhead, by the works of creation and providence, with which I was everywhere surrounded. I saw his glory in the heavens, and in the firmament his handy work; so that I could not but exclaim, 'O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!' From my reasoning powers I felt myself raised above the brutes, and was led to conclude that my existence would, in point of duration, run parallel with the throne of God, and that I must surely be accountable to my Maker for the deeds done in my body.

"As for the Scriptures, I still doubted their divine original, and this doubt continued on my mind in a greater or less degree for many years, as will be seen in the sequel. Yet finding the sacred oracles so well calculated to support and comfort my mind, so agreeable to the ideas of God derived from creation and providence, and testifying throughout so highly and honourably of God's character, I was determined through grace to abide by them and make them the rule of my faith and practice, which determination, thank God, I have hitherto been enabled to keep."

Mr. Hirst does not, in the course of his narrative, resume, as he intended, the subject of this temptation. That it afterwards escaped him will be no matter of surprise, when it is remembered that he drew up this account of himself so late as the year 1812, when he was in his 76th year, and his bodily and mental powers were greatly impaired. However, in conversation with his friends,

he frequently alluded to his former doubts respecting the divine origin of the Bible.

Mr. Hirst at one time was strongly tempted to commit the crime of suicide. During the violence of this temptation he was for some time unwell and confined to his room. Being left alone in his chamber, and perceiving a razor lying on the chimney-piece, he felt himself unaccountably and almost irresistibly impelled to rise and take the instrument to commit the horrid deed. He then called Mrs. Hirst and informed her of the state of his mind. She was greatly alarmed, and wished to remove the razor. Mr. Hirst would not suffer it to be removed, alleging that in that case he should prove himself a coward, not a conqueror. She then desired to stay by him, but he would not consent to that either. She having withdrawn, he began to reason with himself on the folly and wickedness of the temptation. The result of his meditation was, that he had no right to take away his life, because it was God's property, and that no advantage whatever could possibly arise from such an act, but every way the reverse. He then arose from his bed, and walked deliberately to the fire. He took the razor in his hand, laid it down, took it again, opened it, shut it, laid it by—in order, as he expressed himself, to show Satan that in the strength of his Redeemer he was more than a match for him. Had he suffered the razor to be removed, or Mrs. Hirst to have stayed by him, in his opinion the temptation would have returned with double strength and fury the next opportunity; but in this way he gained a complete victory, and the assault was not repeated.

Mrs. Hirst afterwards informed him that she had been all the time observing him from the stairs, and with what anxiety is not easily imagined. This relation I had from Mr. Hirst in the year 1795, and I record it in connexion with his other temptations.

Very soon after his union with the Methodists he was made the leader of a class. The Methodist societies are divided into small classes, according to their local situation. These meet, separately, at least once a week. Generally the most gifted and active among them are selected, and placed as a kind of teachers and rulers over the rest. These make reports to the preachers of the increase or decrease of their respective classes, and of their attendance or neglect, as well as of their general deportment. When they meet, the class leader not only directs the worship, but inquires into the state of their minds, and gives suitable reproof, instruction, advice, caution, and comfort, according to his ability and his judgment of their cases. The talents of Mr. Hirst were soon discovered, and he was elevated to this office, which I believe he held till he was expelled from the society.

About this period, one of the gentlemen in whose service he was employed objected to Mr. Hirst on account of his religion, and threatened to dismiss him from his service if he continued his zeal and exertions in favour of the Methodists. Mr. Hirst was

not to be intimidated by the words of a man, nor driven from his religion by the fear of worldly disadvantages. He dared to vindicate his conduct in the presence of his complaining master, Mr. Booth, who, instead of dismissing him from his service, embraced his religion, and became his companion in the despised ways of Methodism.

Mr. Hirst observes, "In the year 1764, I was engaged among the Methodists as a local preacher, and in general met with great acceptance. I frequently preached at Bacup, Millend, Rossendale, Padiham, Longclough near Whitworth, and at Buersil and other places in the neighbourhood of Rochdale. But when I had laboured among them about twelve months, I was strongly suspected of being a Calvinist, though at this time I did not know there were any such people in the world. Some time after this I showed the superintendant a letter which I intended to send to an acquaintance of mine. When he had read it he said, 'John, you do not agree with us in sentiment.' With astonishment I inquired, 'Wherein do we differ?' but he would not answer me. This grieved me extremely, for I did not at that time, nor could I for a long time afterwards, believe that God had another people on earth equally excellent with the Methodists.

"The next day I asked my fellow-class-leader if the preacher had informed him of what had passed between us. He told me that he was acquainted with it, and that the point of difference was my believing that the righteousness of Christ imputed to a sinner was the sole and exclusive ground of his justification in the sight of God. This very much affected me. 'What!' said I, 'do not the Methodists believe this?' He replied, 'I do, but some of them do not.' I was ready to exclaim, 'Lord! what must I do? I am undone without this righteousness. I have none at all of my own. O Lord, if I am not found in thy righteousness, I cannot be saved.' The Bible was my only guide. I applied to it again for information on this very important subject; and here I could find no other way of acceptance but by the Lord as our Righteousness. Here therefore I was resolved to abide, because to give up this doctrine was to give up my hope, my joy, my heaven, my all. Having yet read none of Mr. Wesley's writings, I procured some of them, and read in particular his abridgment of Mr. John Goodwin. Here I found he plainly denied the obedience of Christ being imputed for our justification. I was confounded, but I was not convinced. About this time I happened to hear a sermon from Mr. John Parker, on Psalm xxxiv. 17. He described the Lord's people as righteous by the imputation of Christ's righteousness unto them—by the regenerating and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit in them—and by a practical conformity to the will of God. The Lord was pleased to bless this sermon to my soul. I was fully delivered from my confusion of mind, and established in the doctrine of imputation; and, thanks be to God, I have to this day stood confirmed in the belief of it, and derived from it at many times unspeakable comfort.

“Such was my affection for the Methodists that it sometimes prevailed over my judgment, and I was tempted in my preaching, if not to deny, yet to cover, conceal, or omit the doctrine of justification by the obedience and death of Christ. Notwithstanding this criminal weakness, I was charged with Calvinism. There were many of my hearers who professed great satisfaction in my labours, and that in proportion as I honestly avowed my sentiments. This roused the indignation of the travelling preachers, and after some time they brought me before Mr. Wesley. I was charged with propagating erroneous sentiments respecting justification. I admitted that I held the doctrine called erroneous, but I could not learn otherwise from the Bible, which was my only rule. Mr. Wesley treated me with tenderness. He only requested that I would be silent respecting the point of difference between me and his people; and he would allow me my sentiments in private, if I would not divulge them in my preaching. I replied that I had not, as had been hinted, the most distant thought of making a division among his people; but that I could not promise to conceal what I judged to be truth, and very important truth, nor to aim at anything in my preaching but to glorify God by publishing his whole counsel to dying men. I was dismissed from his presence, not knowing but that I might be presently excluded the society; but the preachers, for some reason or other, thought proper not to proceed so far at that time. It was several months after this before I was excluded, and I continued preaching as before.”

Some might be more gratified, if the time, the place, and the particular conversation of this meeting could have been exactly stated. I have been informed that the late Mr. Croft, of Rochdale, a local preacher among the Methodists, was called in as evidence against Mr. Hirst on the occasion. The charge was founded on a sermon which Mr. Hirst had recently preached. Mr. Wesley required the text and the outlines of the sermon; Mr. Hirst repeated the heads and the particulars before him. Mr. Wesley acknowledged the division to be just and natural, and what he himself should probably have adopted; “But, young man,” said he, “I should have illustrated those particulars very differently.” He exhorted the people to have a little patience with him. “He is but a young man,” said he, “and perhaps in time he may see his error.”

(To be concluded in our next.)

I know some places that are as green and fair to the eye as the best way man ever set foot into, yet, if you venture upon them, you sink up to the neck. Whilst men make their own righteousness and obedience their way to God's favour, they seem to be in a fair and green path, which promises safety and firmness; yet he that dares trust himself in the way of his own righteousness, as his way to God and heaven, will find himself sink so fast that, if Christ come not and pluck him out, he will sink over head and ears.—*Crisp.*

A WORD OF EXPERIENCE.

Extracted from "Law and Grace Unfolded, or, the Two Covenants." By JOHN BUNYAN.

Now, before I go any further, let me speak a word from my own experience of the things of Christ; and the rather because we have a company of silly ones in this day of ignorance, that do either comfort themselves with a notion without the power, or else do both reject the notion and the power of this most glorious gospel. Therefore, for the further conviction of the reader, I shall tell him (with David) something of what the Lord hath done for my soul; and indeed a little of the experience of the things of Christ is of far more worth than all the world. It would be too tedious for me, reader, to tell thee here all from the first to the last; but something I shall tell thee, that thou mayest not think these things fables.

Reader, when it pleased the Lord to begin to instruct my soul, he found me one of the blackest sinners of the world: he found me making sport of oaths, and also of lies; and many a soul-poisoning meal did I make out of divers lusts, as drinking, dancing, playing, and pleasuring with the wicked ones of the world. The Lord finding me in this condition, did open the glass of his law unto me, wherein he showed me so clearly my sins, both the greatness of them and also how abominable they were in his sight, that I thought the very clouds were charged with the wrath of God, and ready to let fall the very fire of his jealousy upon me.

This conviction seized on my soul one Sabbath day when I was at play, being one of the first that I had; which, when it came, though it scared me with its terror, yet, through the temptation of the devil immediately striking in therewith, I did rub it off again, and became as vile for some time as I was before, like a wretch that I was. Yea, for all this I was so wedded to my sins that I thought with myself, "I will have them, though I lose my soul." O wicked wretch that I was! But God, the great, the rich, the infinitely merciful God, did not take this advantage of my soul to cast me away, and say, "Then take him, devil, seeing he cares for me no more." No; but he followed me still, and won upon my heart by giving me some understanding, not only of my miserable state, which I was very sensible of, but also that there might be hopes of mercy—also taking away that love to lust, and placing in the room thereof a love to religion; and thus the Lord won over my heart to some desire after the means, to hear the word, and to grow a stranger to my old companions, and to accompany the people of God, together with giving me many sweet encouragements from several promises in the Scriptures.

But after this the Lord did wonderfully set my sins upon my conscience, those sins especially that I had committed since the first conviction. Temptations also followed me very hard, especially such temptations as did tend to the making me question the very way of salvation, viz., whether Jesus Christ was the Saviour or

not; and whether I had best to venture my soul upon his blood for salvation, or take some other course. But I was, through grace, kept close with God (in some measure) in prayer and the rest of the ordinances, and was about a year and upwards without any sound evidence from God to my soul touching the salvation which comes by Jesus Christ. But at the last, as you may say, when the set time was come, the Lord (just before the men called Quakers came into the country) did set me down so blessedly in the doctrine of Jesus Christ, that it made me marvel to see, first, how Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, walked in the world a while with his disciples, afterwards hanged on the cross, spilt his blood, was buried, rose again, ascended into heaven, where he lives to make intercession, and that he also will come again at the last day to judge the world and take his saints unto himself. These things, I say, I did see so evidently, even as if I had stood by when he was in the world, and also when he was caught up into heaven. I having such a change as this upon my soul, it made me wonder and muse with myself at the great alteration that was in my spirit; for the Lord did also very gloriously give me his precious word to back the discovery of the Son of God unto me, so that I can say, through grace, it was according to Scripture, (1 Cor. xv. 1—4;) and as I was musing with myself what these things should mean, methought I heard such a word as this in my heart: "I have thus set thee down on purpose, for I have something more than ordinary for thee to do," which made me the more marvel, saying, "What, my Lord, such a poor wretch as I?" Yet still this continued: "I have set thee down on purpose," and so forth, with more manifestations of the Lord Jesus and the power of the blood of his cross upon my soul, even so evidently, that I saw, through grace, that it was the blood shed on Mount Calvary that did save and redeem sinners, as clearly and as really with the eyes of my soul as ever (methought) I had seen a penny loaf bought with a penny; which things then discovered had such operation upon my soul, that I do hope they did sweetly season every faculty thereof.

Reader, I speak in the presence of God, and he knows I lie not. Much of this and such like dealings of his I could tell thee of; but my business at this time is not so to do, but only to tell what operation the blood of Christ hath had over and upon my conscience, and that at several times, and also when I have been in several frames of spirit.

And first. Sometimes I have been so laden with my sins, that I could not tell where to rest nor what to do; yea at such times I thought it would have taken away my senses. Yet at that time God, through grace, hath all of a sudden so effectually applied the blood that was spilt on Mount Calvary out of the side of Jesus, unto my poor wounded, guilty conscience, that presently I have found such a sweet, solid, sober, heart-comforting peace, that it hath made me as if my guilt had not been; and with the same (I may say, and I ought to say) the power of it hath had such a

powerful operation upon my soul, that I have for a time been in a strait and trouble to think that I should love and honour him no more, the virtue of his blood hath so constrained me.

Again. Sometimes methinks my sins have appeared so great to me, that I thought one of my sins had been as great as all the sins of all the men in the nation—aye, and of other nations too. (Reader, these things are not fancies, for I have smarted for this experience.) But yet the least stream of the heart's blood of this Man Jesus hath banished all away, and made it to fly, to the astonishment of a poor sinner; and, as I said before, hath delivered me up into sweet and heavenly peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Again. Sometimes when my heart hath been hard, dead, blind, slothful, and senseless, (which, indeed, are sad frames for a poor Christian to be in,) yet at such a time, when I have been in such a case, then hath the blood of Christ, the precious blood of Christ, the admirable blood of the God of heaven, that ran out of his body when he did hang on the cross, so softened, enlivened, quickened, and enlightened my soul, that truly, reader, I can say, O! it makes me wonder.

Again. When I have been laden with sin, and pestered with several temptations, and that in a very sad manner, then have I had the trial of the virtue of Christ's blood, with the trial of the virtue of other things; and I have found that when tears would not do, prayers would not do, repentings and all other things could not reach my heart, O! then, one touch, one drop, one shining of the virtue of that blood that was let out with a spear, it hath in so very blessed a manner delivered me, that it hath made me to marvel. O! methinks it hath come with such life, such power, such irresistible and marvellous glory, as to wipe off all the slurs, silence all the outcries, and quench all the fiery darts of the devil, and all the flames of hell fire, begotten by the charges of the law, Satan, and doubting remembrances of my sinful life.

Friends, as the Apostle Peter saith to the church, so I say to you: I have not preached unto you cunningly devised fables, in telling you of the blood of Christ, and what authority it hath had upon my conscience. O, no! but as Peter saith, touching the coming of the Lord Jesus into the world, so, in some measure, I can say of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, that was shed when he did come into the world. There is not only my single testimony touching this; no; but all the prophets do agree likewise in advancing this in writing, and also all the saints do now declare the same, in speaking forth the amiableness and many powerful virtues thereof. "As for thee, by the blood of thy covenant," saith God to Christ, "I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein was no water." (Zech. ix. 11.) "We have redemption through his blood." (Ephes. i. 7.) "Our robes are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb." (Rev. vi. 14.) The devil is overcome "through the blood of the Lamb." (Rev. xii. 11.) Yea, and conscience is purged, too, and that "through the blood of the Lamb." (Heb. ix. 14.) "We have free recourse to the throne of grace through

the blood of Jesus. (Heb. x. 19.) I could bring a cloud of witnesses out of all the types and shadows, and out of the sundry prophets, and much more out of the New Testament, but I forbear, because I would not be too tedious to the reader in making too large a digression, though I have committed here in this discourse no transgression, for the blood of Christ is precious blood. (1 Pet. xviii. 19.)

MY STRENGTH IS MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS.

Dear Sir,—May mercy and peace be multiplied unto you.

Having received part of a letter addressed to poor worthless me, saying that the Lord had blessed a few of my scribbling letters to some of his tried children in your part of the world,* I feel it in my heart to drop you a line, to say that I felt thankful and humbled before God to think that ever he should own and bless his truth through such a worthless pipe. My soul has proved some thousands of times during these fifty years, that by the grace of God I am what I am; and I am no further yet—no, nor ever expect to get a hair's breadth beyond it. I have indeed tugged and toiled hard to get a stock in hand, and have had a hope that I should not always be such a poor pauper upon charity. But alas! instead of getting more independent of charity, I am more dependent than ever; and I am proving in my very soul, to this very hour, that all my supplies, whether for body or soul, for time or eternity, flow from the Fountain of Charity—the everlasting love of a covenant God through Christ, as a sovereign, free gift. And when my soul is well served here, I am satisfied, and am content to be a beggar, and never wish to leave the trade of begging, for it is all gain and no loss. But it is hard work when there is nothing but begging, longing, sighing, and crying—frowns instead of smiles, and instead of being relieved, I am obliged to come away empty.

Oh! how my poor soul has sometimes been sinking, and fears have risen up in my heart at my devilish wanderings from him, my wretched hardness, deadness, and coldness of affection towards him! Surely, methinks, I have wearied him quite out; he will never again relieve such a worthless wretch. Here I am sometimes quite at a stand. I try to give it all up, but cannot. I try to read the word of God, to pick up a crumb; but it is a sealed book. I cry and shout, but the heavens appear as brass; and here I am obliged to cry till the dear Lord comes to my relief, with neither strength to stand, nor faith to believe, nor hope to expect, nor love to embrace, nor patience to wait—a poor, forlorn, dejected, sorrowful, confounded, dismayed, cast-down soul, full of doleful lamentations. "I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls." "I am a sparrow alone on the housetop;" "I am a worm, and no man;" "I am as a beast before thee." "Mine eyes, O Lord, are up unto thee; pluck my feet out of the net; turn thou unto me, for I am desolate

* The above letter was written to a person resident in America.

and afflicted; the troubles of my heart are enlarged. O! bring thou me out of my distresses." "For the enemy hath persecuted my soul, he hath smitten my life down to the ground, he hath made me dwell in darkness as those that are long dead; therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me, my heart within me is desolate." And what makes it still worse, at such times as these the old serpent, the devil, pours into my poor shipwrecked soul such a flood of awful, tremendous blasphemies against my dear Lord, who has been such a kind Friend to me all the days of my life, that my soul reels to and fro, and staggers like a drunken man, and I am at my wit's end.

My soul then verily fears that God has totally left me to the devil, and that I shall prove an apostate at last. I cry with bitter anguish, "O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me;" for "my soul thirsteth for God—for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?" "Hear me speedily. O Lord, for my spirit faileth; hide not thy face from me, lest I be like those that go down into the pit. Cause me to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning, for in thee do I trust; cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul unto thee. Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies, for I flee unto thee to hide me." And here my soul lies till God's set time of deliverance to my soul, for he has set times to deliver Zion; and at his appointed time he will come, and will not tarry a moment longer, nor come one moment sooner. And bless his dear name, it is just at the right time, whatever flesh and blood or the devil may say. O what heart-breaking, what soul-astonishing, what spirit-reviving, what victory-shouting, what devil-fleeting, when my dear Lord comes into my poor devil-dragged soul with, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee!" "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him." "I have long holden my peace; I have been still and refrained myself; now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once." Power belongs unto God; and when his powerful voice of love and mercy enters into my distracted soul, not one devil is to be seen; they are all gone into their dens, and dare not so much as put out their snouts while the glory of the God of all comfort shines in the soul. O how my soul has then shouted, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; for when I fall I shall arise, when I sit in darkness the Lord will be a light unto me!" "Some trust in chariots, some in horses; but we will remember the name of our God. They are brought down and fallen, but we are risen and stand upright." My soul can then sing, "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream; then was my mouth filled with laughter, and my tongue with singing." "The Lord hath done great things for me, whereof I am glad." "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." Thus, you see, my religion is made up of death and life, emptying and filling,

stripping and clothing, wounding and healing, famishing and feeding, sinking and swimming, groaning and singing, falling and rising, laughing and crying, crawling like a worm and flying like an eagle, a barren heath and a fruitful field, a stinking mud-hole and a springing well, as black as a devil and as fair as the curtains of Solomon. So you see what a strange, in and out, up and down soul I am.

I have been above fifty years learning two parts of the word of God, and am still learning, and believe I shall never get beyond it; one is, that without Christ I can do nothing; the other is, that with Christ strengthening me I can do all things. "By the grace of God I am what I am." O! what an unspeakable mercy that salvation is of the Lord, and not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. Bless his dear name, he rests in his love; charity never faileth; what a mercy for such poor paupers! at least I find it so to my soul, for I am still proving myself as helpless, as needy of God's grace as ever I was in my life. And, bless the dear Lord! he is as good as ever; as full of mercy as ever.

May the Lord direct your soul and mine, and lead us into the glories of his truth as it is in Christ, that we may be preserved from running after "Lo, here, and Lo, there, is Christ!" But may we ever prove him to be in our hearts the Hope of Glory. And may we be looking for that blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, and be proved to be a part of mercy's building, that when the top stone is brought we may shout, "Grace, grace unto it for ever and ever." So prays a poor worm saved by grace.

Trowbridge, Sept. 30, 1847.

J. W.

BELOVED, I WISH ABOVE ALL THINGS THAT THOU
MAYEST PROSPER AND BE IN HEALTH, EVEN AS
• THY SOUL PROSPERETH.

My dear Friend in the Lord Jesus Christ,—I write hoping you are in good health, and that your soul also is in prosperity. I am glad to say such is the case with me at present—a favour rich, free, and heart-cheering. My worthless soul hardly knows how to be grateful enough for such undeserved favours, and expression fails to communicate my sense of the goodness of the Lord.

My soul is satisfied with all God's dealings with me. The tempter is out of sight; love to sin seems subdued, and I can say, "My Jesus hath done all things well." O how rare this is with me! for I am one of the most vile, grovelling, and (at times) sin-loving creatures that ever God permitted to live. But again it is the plague of my heart, and it plunges me into shame and confusion of face before God, till I cry out, "O, wretched man that I am!" But to glorify God in the fires is the work of the Holy Spirit, which I trust I enjoy at this time.

Being peculiarly situated in my mind of late, these words were this morning made a great blessing to me: "Ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace." (Isaiah lv. 12.) O, how I could rest upon a promising God and Father in Christ! I rejoiced in my own soul on my own account, and also over all God's elect who are scattered abroad, and felt willing to endure all things for the elect's sake, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. As instead of this, I am often repining and murmuring, I do feel the Lord's goodness in giving me once more a time of refreshing from his presence.

I trust, dear friend, you are enabled at times with joy to draw water-out of the wells of salvation. When your last came to hand I was much pleased with it. You spoke of marks by the way; of helps and evidences; and I thought, "O, the mercy of God, to manifest his approval of the conversation together of poor worthless creatures!" for sure I am my soul was edified and established.

May the Lord continue to favour your soul, and may it be like a watered garden. May his cause and people be near your heart. May you daily see his approving hand, his leading Spirit, his safe counsel, his unerring wisdom, his everlasting love, his almighty power, his eternal faithfulness, and the glory and holiness of his humanity in all his mediatorial offices, as Prophet, Priest, and King, and be enabled to say by the faith of the operation of God, "The Lord is my Judge, the Lord is my Lawgiver, the Lord is my King; he will save me."

I hope the God of Jacob is with you as a church and people, and that his dear presence is with the minister whom he has sent amongst you, that he may have a single eye to God's glory in speaking of the things he has tasted, felt, and handled.

From one who at present is resting upon the faithfulness of God for salvation, through the blood of the Lamb,

Yours in the Lord,

C———, February 23, 1848.

A. B. T.

THAT THEY ALSO MAY BE ONE IN US.

My dear Friend,—I had written a long letter to you, but was ashamed to send it. I now make another attempt, though I know it will be of no service to you or me, unless the Lord be pleased to bless it. And O! that he would condescend to smile on each of our souls, and grant us to feel something of his sweet love and mercy, in which I trust we are both interested! Yes, my dear friend, and I think we have abundant reason to bless and praise that solemn and glorious name for such distinguishing favours as he has been pleased to bestow upon us. But, alas! how seldom do I feel able to render to him those sacrifices with which I know he is well pleased!

How are you getting on? I often think of you and others at —, and my feeling of regard and affection spiritually is some-

times very strong; for I trust we have been made known to each other as children of the same blessed family, and have been made to feel something of that dear uniting love which "many waters cannot quench," and which "floods can never drown." And what a special mercy it is to be enabled to unite with that loving disciple of old, and to say, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren;" "And this is his commandment, that we should love one another." We cannot love Jesus without loving his people, nor his people without loving him, as Jesus and his people are mystically one. And oh! the blessedness of that sweet oneness! it is, if rightly considered, most wonderful. What! to be one with the great eternal God? Really, it seems almost impossible; but yet it is a solemn and an eternal truth: "That they all may be one in us." And this blessed oneness and union can never be dissolved, no, not in time, (notwithstanding all the craft and malice of hell, and all the powers of indwelling sin,) nor to all eternity. Oh! sweet oneness and blessed union!

You do not know, nor any man or woman on earth, what sore exercises of mind I have had at times, fearing I have "no part nor lot in this matter;" but of late I trust I have not been without some tokens from the Lord; and that best of blessings to me has been in a measure realized, so that there has not been so much room for that "fear which has torment." But I have had many sore trials to cope with of different kinds, and am very often in a low and dejected state. Sometimes I am exceedingly depressed and cast down, and cannot speak of some of my troubles to any but to the Lord, and sometimes cannot find access there; oh no! but very seldom. But what should I, or what could I do, if it were not for a throne of grace? What a mercy it is that we have such a Friend to go to!

"With heaven and earth at his command,
He waits to answer prayer."

"His eyes are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry." And I trust he has heard and answered me, although I am so very vile and polluted a sinner, and am certain that I deserve nothing but hell every moment of my life.

What virtue there must be in that divine and infinitely precious blood to redeem, to sanctify, to justify, and to glorify so filthy a soul as mine! to present me "without blame," "without fault," yea, "without spot," before the blazing throne of Infinite Purity! I do indeed believe that this will be my eternal bliss. And, my dear friend, what a wonderful contrast between the church above and the church below! But there are none in heaven but such as have been here on earth, and they were once mourning here as we are now, and "came out of great tribulation and washed their robes," &c. May the Lord enable us to do the same daily and hourly. We must have the tribulations too, in some way or other. I suppose you have yours. The Lord knows I have mine to a very great degree, so as at times to be almost swallowed up; but I do not

like to complain, when I know that I deserve ten thousand times more. Every trial makes one the less, every moment brings us nearer home; that which we have had will not return again; we shall not have to go over the ground again, nor do I wish that I was ten or twenty years younger; though I sometimes shrink back at the thoughts of death, a subject which is much on my mind, I think more and more; and it is right that it should be so, seeing it is nearer and nearer every moment. Well, the time will soon come, and may the Lord prepare us for every unforeseen circumstance which he has designed for us, and for death. May our hearts pant stronger and stronger after him; may our faith, and love, and filial fear daily increase; and may it be our earnest desire, and may we be enabled, to do his will the little time which we have to continue here.

Do you ever feel disposed to pray for the poor worm who now writes? I hope you do. I am confident that there is not a poor sinner on earth who stands in more need of the prayers of the saints than I, and may the Lord enable you to pray earnestly on my behalf. I trust I am sometimes constrained to do so for you.

You will find this a poor miserable letter, and if it did not come free without one penny's cost I would not send it, because I do not think it worth a penny. But I hope you will excuse it, and as I would do better if I could, pray take the will for the deed.

May the Lord in infinite mercy bless you and yours.

Yours unfeignedly for the truth's sake,

Thornecombe, April 6th, 1848.

S. D.

A FRAGMENT.

The Lord left me to myself; and when an enemy of the truth said in my hearing, that I belonged to the Established Church, the fear of man so completely got possession of me, that I did not contradict it, and so let him believe that I was even as he was. My conscience rose against me at the time, but I found means to stifle it in its operation. I tried to say "Peace, peace," and to believe I had done no harm; but before the evening closed, the Lord sent a Nathan to me, and my sin was brought to remembrance. A terrible uneasiness came upon me. Still I was unwilling to go and acknowledge my real principles, but tried to hide my iniquity in my own bosom. But again the Lord roused me with this scripture: "He that denieth me before man, him will I also deny;" and this: "Because thou hast kept the faith." I felt condemned, for I knew I had not kept the faith.

The burden of guilt on my soul daily increased, and I thought I could have borne anything better than a consciousness of having denied the Lord. But the enemy suggested that it would be acting with folly, now it had passed, to tell the truth, as the consequences might be fatal to my temporal prospects, and that it would be better to wait another opportunity. This would not do for me

long, however, for the Lord had sent the arrow of conviction into my soul, and all the carnal reasoning in the world could not extract it. Nor did he let me rest till I was made not only willing but joyful, because I was willing to tell out boldly that I belonged to the sect everywhere spoken against, and brought to seek after a manifestation of pardoning mercy, and like poor weeping Peter, did not seek for it in vain.

E. E. P.

INQUIRY.

Dear Friends,—A practice prevails with many shopkeepers in this city of paying their young men what is called *premiums* on all sales effected by them, to induce them to force a sale; and unless they are able to show, at the end of a certain time, that they have forced a good trade, they are discharged as incompetent.

There is also another practice, which is that of placing in the windows what are called “decoy ducks;” that is, a quantity of goods, stockings for instance, are piled up in the window, and the top pair marked at a low figure, 6d. or 7d. per pair, *implying* that all in the pile are of the same price. A passer-by casts his eye on the figure, and is thereby decoyed into the shop. To his astonishment, however, he finds that it is only the *top* pair that is the price marked; all the rest are considerably more. Then the young men, for the sake of the *premiums*, and to retain their situations, are compelled to use all manner of argument, and all kinds of deceit, to induce the person to buy. Nor does it stop here; for no sooner has one shopman done all he can, than another steps up with dresses, handkerchiefs, &c., each being unscrupulous in his declarations that they are of the very best quality, and wonderfully cheap, when he knows that he is uttering falsehoods; but *all* must be done for the sake of the *premiums*.

Now, my end in writing to you is, to ask you whether you think any God-fearing man can countenance such practices, and whether the premium paid for *forced* sales is not a premium to encourage falsehoods?

Yours in love,

London, May 3, 1848.

S.

ANSWER.

We have inserted the above inquiry as affording us an opportunity to drop a few hints upon a somewhat important subject. We have, doubtless, readers—some we hope that really fear God, and others that make a profession of godliness—engaged in business, who cannot be ignorant of the many deceptions systematically practised in trade.

It is true that the practices alluded to by our correspondent are carried on chiefly by linendrapers; but there can be no doubt that in well nigh every business, whether of manufacture or of sale, falsehood and deception most awfully abound. The world we must leave; it is to those alone who profess godliness that we

speak; and the question is, whether any who desire to fear God can be a party to these things consistently with godliness.

But it may be urged as an objection to our noticing this subject, that, not being in business ourselves, we cannot understand anything about it, and had therefore better leave it alone. To which we answer, 1. That not being in business ourselves is the very reason why we should dwell upon the deceptions practised in it; for were we interested parties, our eyes might be so blinded, our heart so hardened, and our mouth so gagged by the love of money, the root of all evil, that we might be able neither to see, nor feel, nor speak at all upon the point as becometh godliness; and, 2. If such an objection were valid, it would stop every mouth and pen, pulpit and press, from pointing out, and warning the people of God against, evil of every kind, and allow none to say a word on the subject, except the very persons whose interest it is to be silent upon it. So that this would be the conclusion: one party *must* not say a word about "tricks of trade," because they understand them too little; and the other party *would* not, because they understand them too well; and thus, between the two, not a word would be said at all—a most pleasant and convenient arrangement, it must be allowed, for those who love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil.

A man need not fall up to his neck in a ditch to know it is dirty, nor be swept through a mill-race to see it is strong.

We, then, who can stand on the edge of the ditch without being stifled by its dirt, and by the side of the mill-race without being drowned by its stream, may lift up our voice and warn the money-grubbers not to wade in the quag, though the bottom glitter with sovereigns, nor fall off the bank, lest the mill-wheel break all their bones.

The various deceptions we need not particularise, even were we acquainted with them; but, in addition to those mentioned by our correspondent, we may instance a third, which we know to be a fact. Materials for a lady's dress are exhibited in the shop window, ticketed thus: "This dress for so-and-so;" of course, at a very low figure. The article catches the eye of some dear lover of cheap things, who after all does not really need it, but cannot resist the temptation of a ticket headed, "Tremendous sacrifice"—(yes, to Mammon, not to you)—is purchased with twenty lies told over it, and taken or sent home. But, alas! to the great mortification of the victim of the "tremendous sacrifice," when examined, it is a poor, wretched, flimsy thing, which in one sense may well be called "a dress," for there is little in it but starch, and in another not a dress at all—for when measured it is short by two or three yards of the quantity necessary to make it up.

In these and similar tricks of trade there are three parties concerned, all of whom, though not in an equal degree, deserve severe blame—the master, the assistant, and the purchaser.

We shall apportion out what we consider the just measure to each.

1. Foremost in guilt, though generally hindmost in sight, is the master—the employer—the great driving-wheel which sets the whole machine in motion. He it is for whose interest all the lies are told, from the head-assistant down to the errand-boy. Every trick, every falsehood, every misrepresentation, is money to his pocket—grist to his mill—so much additional per cent. profit on his capital. We once heard a tradesman professing godliness say that he could not keep his young men from telling lies. Not keep them? For whose profit were the lies told—his, or theirs? There is an old maxim of the civil law, “If you want to discover the perpetrator of a concealed crime, find out the person whom its commission benefits.” Apply this test to the present case. Who is benefited by the lies? The employer, or the assistant?

But the master may say, “I do not bid my assistants tell lies.” No; not in so many words. But if you give the highest wages to the best salesman, or allow a premium on every forced sale—if, as you stalk up and down your shop, or from your elevated desk glancing here and there with vulture eye, when you see a customer leave without making a purchase, a black look telegraphs to the unfortunate assistant your disappointment—in a word, if, directly or indirectly, you plainly show that you will reward him best who sells your articles most, leaving to him how to do so, and will discountenance or discharge those who cannot force a sale—if by such and similar methods best known to yourself you encourage your assistants to tell lies for your benefit, you are as guilty of falsehood as if every lie told behind your counter came from your own mouth. Nay, you might call your young men together every morning, and say aloud to them, “I will not allow any lies to be told to customers in my shop,” or might have written up in their bedrooms in large letters, “He that worketh deceit shall not dwell in my house; he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight;” and yet, if you evidently best reward the most dexterous salesman—in other words, the greatest liar among them—your assistants might laugh at your hypocrisy, but they would run over their tales with equal, if not greater, glibness and effrontery. Beggars in London send out their children to beg, and beat them if they bring nothing home. Who begs—the parent, or the child? In St. Giles’s children are taught to pick pockets by a figure hung round with bells. If the bell ring when the pocket is touched, the child is beaten; if the handkerchief be abstracted and no sound produced, the child is rewarded. Who picks pockets afterwards in the streets? the teacher, or the taught—the master, or the pupil?

Apply this to the present case. Who whines and begs behind the counter? The employer, or the assistant? Who picks the customer’s pockets? The master, or the servant? The *governor*, or the governed?

But you may say, “I cannot *live* unless I do as other tradesmen do.” *Die* then. You had better die in a workhouse, with the fear and grace of God in your heart, than live in Regent Street and go to hell.

Apply your excuse to other sins. May not the drunkard say, "I cannot live unless I drink?" Or the adulterer, "I cannot live unless with some other woman than my wife?" Or the miser, "I cannot live unless I feast my eye with sovereigns?" Or the thief, "I cannot live unless I steal?" How do *you* differ from them? Do you not say, "I cannot live unless I lie?"

Besides, what distrust is here of the providence of God! What! cannot the Lord prosper honesty and uprightness? Must you be dishonest in order to bring down his blessing? Or is there no Providence at all in the matter? and are Luck, Chance, and Fortune your trinity? O how soon may the Lord whom you despise and insult bring you down; and whilst you are planning a new plate-glass front, a larger shop, or a more fashionable situation, how speedily may your name figure in the *Gazette*!

2. The *assistant* is certainly criminally guilty in lending himself a tool to his master's avarice and dishonesty. Each, doubtless, will shift the guilt to the other's shoulders. "I don't tell the lie," says the master: "I don't tell the lie to benefit myself, but my employer," says the man. "I am not guilty," cries the one: "I am not criminal," replies the other. "Thou art the liar," says the head, "*by* whom the lie is told:" "Thou art the liar," answers the hand, "*for* whom I tell it." We settle the controversy summarily thus: "You are both liars together. You *for* whom, you *by* whom the lie is told, are accomplices in guilt." Which is the greater it is not for us to settle. The assistant we may pity, but we cannot acquit, when the word of God is point blank against him.

Is it not a fearful sentence that, "*all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone,*" (Rev. xxi. 8;) and that, "Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and *whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.*" (Rev. xxii. 15.) Nothing is said here about telling lies in person or by proxy. No fine drawn distinctions are made between the person *by* whom, and the person *for* whom the lie is told. Such Jesuitical casuistry the Bible knows nothing of. Its sharp sword is drawn against "*all liars,*" and it shuts out from the city of life "*whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.*"

Young men, these things are worth considering by all who desire to fear God; and it is no light and trifling question, whether you will serve God or mammon—for you cannot serve both.

But the assistant who fears God may say, "What must I do? I must either tell lies, or leave my situation." Such may be the alternative in your fears; but not necessarily in the providence of God. Joseph, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, Nehemiah, and Mordecai, had, and retained their situations in idolatrous courts without compromising their principles, or bowing down to heathen gods. And cannot the same God that placed and kept them there do as much for you? aye, not only preserve you in the furnace and in the lions' den, but give you favour in your master's sight, and make him value you the more in proportion to your honesty and

uprightness? May this be your course: "I will do my best to serve my master; but I will not sell my conscience. I will not, I cannot tell lies to please and benefit him. I have to serve a higher Master, who has bought me with his own precious blood, and I had better displease all than Him, my best, my only Friend."

3. Nor can we acquit the *customer* of blame in this matter. "A cheap bargain"—"a good bargain"—"an excellent bargain," is the bait that catches so many greedy fish. Why not deal with honest tradesmen whom you know, and on whom you can depend, instead of running here and there after bargains? It is the covetous spirit of the purchaser—that insatiable craving after cheapness, without consideration of the real value of the article, which after all is the root of so many frauds and lies. Were persons content to buy only *what* they really wanted, only *when* they really needed it, and only of honest and upright tradesmen, they would be both more willing and more able to give for it its real value. But through this headlong race after cheapness all parties suffer both guilt and loss: the *master* sells his goods at a low profit to his customers, and his soul at a high profit to the devil; the *assistant* loses his situation if he do not tell lies, and unless grace prevent, his soul if he do tell them; and the *purchaser* loses his money, his temper, and his conscience by sacrificing to Mammon, the god of cheapness.

But it may be said, "Business is so done now that in the competition for trade a really honest man must be ruined." But if trade be altered, is the Bible altered too? Does the revealed will of God fluctuate according to the markets, and rise and fall with the price of stocks? Are truth and honesty to be regulated every quarter by a jury of tradesmen, as the price of iron is fixed at the quarterly meetings of the ironmasters? In the times of the primitive church, many martyrs were put to death in the most horrid tortures, because they would not deny the Lord Jesus Christ; and in later times in our own country men have been burned to ashes because they would not say a consecrated wafer was the Son of God. Might not both have argued, "I cannot live unless I lie?" No; they preferred to die.

Thus in every point of view must the system be condemned, for we are sure it cannot stand by the word of God, nor by the verdict of a tender conscience.—Eds.

My hopes, from appearances, are cold. My faith has no bed to sleep upon but God's omnipotency.—*Rutherford*.

We forget God, when we are afraid of man. We overlook and pass by the many comforts we enjoy, even while we are under affliction, taking little notice of our mercies, but let them be all swallowed up in our miseries; as Abraham, because he had no heir: as Rachel, who said, "Give me children, or I die;" though she had all other earthly comforts, yet the want of this one so troubled her, that all the rest seemed nothing.—*Bunyan*.

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

All the angels in heaven cannot subdue the heart of a sinner. Heart-work is God's work. The great heart-maker must be the great heart-breaker.—*Dyer*.

If a pharisee can but get a few husks to feed upon, and muster up a few rags of self-righteousness to throw over his back, he is presently as proud as Lucifer.—*Gill*.

As at the deluge the waters covered the highest mountains as well as the lowest hills, so pardoning mercy cancels the greatest sins as well as the least.—*Arrowsmith*.

Happy are those who venture out into the open streets with the name of Christ upon their foreheads, at a time when so many are ashamed of him, and hide him as it were under their cloaks, as if he were a stolen Saviour.—*Rutherford*.

Pearls are not gotten but from the bottom of the water; and gold is digged, not from the surface, but from the deep entrails of the earth. So the joy of God is not to be found but in the inward recesses of a broken and contrite spirit.

The sanctifying principle of grace in the heart may be compared to a candle in a lanthorn, which transmits its light through the lanthorn, though in and of itself the lanthorn still continues what it was before—a dark body.

Unnecessary scruples cause disquietness, solitariness, idleness. When persons will not do what is needful, they are troubled with that which is needless; and idleness tempts the devil to tempt us and trouble us. If we cannot find work for ourselves, the devil will make work for us.—*Bunyan*.

First, souls look to Christ, by faith, for pardon through his blood, and then they mourn for sins pardoned; and never do they mourn better and more sincerely, or are more ashamed and confounded because of their sins, than when they are most satisfied that God is pacified towards them for all that they have done.—*Gill*.

God never looks to anything in the creature to win him to show kindness, neither to righteousness in men to persuade him to pardon sin, nor to unrighteousness in men to hinder him from giving this pardon, and acquitting, therefore, their transgressions. It is only and simply for his own sake that he pardons men.—*Crisp*.

Whence is it that the doctrines of special election, of efficacious grace in regeneration and conversion, of justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, and of the infallible perseverance of the saints, though so clearly revealed and so strongly proved in the word of God, are, notwithstanding, so generally denied, opposed, and ridiculed? Because they give all the glory to God, and will not allow man so much as to boast a little.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."—Matt. v. 6.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9.

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. xi. 7.

"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Acts vii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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SATAN'S POLICY DETECTED, AND HIS CRAFT
EXPOSED.—BY JOHN RUSK.

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices."—2 Cor. ii. 11.

(Continued from page 300.)

4. *Satan's attempts to get an advantage.*—This has already been hinted at under the head of his devices; but I mean here to be more particular, in trying to hunt him out of some places that we little suspect him to be in.

1. What can be a greater blessing, literally speaking, than for a working man to enjoy sleep! it refreshes him, and prepares him for the next day's work. But here the devil will come as sure as you are born, if you are a believer, sometimes in reading the Scriptures or a good book, in prayer, or hearing the word; and bring this sleepiness on you, and that very powerfully. You may shake yourself, or do what you can to rouse yourself, yet this will hold you down; but leave religious exercise, and go on with worldly concerns, and you will be quite wakeful. Now, Satan attempts in this way to get an advantage of us. He says, "You working people are tired, and to feel sleepy is a weakness that all good people are subject to." What has the devil to do here? That it is a weakness I do not deny; but Satan attempts in this way to get an advantage; and so Christ said to his disciples when he found them asleep: "The flesh is weak." Still he called it a temptation. Now, this is the first attempt.

2. When you come out of a place of worship, the sermon shall be fresh on your mind; but no sooner are you out than Satan has somebody at the door to divert your mind from what you have been hearing, either in lawful or unlawful discourse—sometimes about business, or it may be to talk against people or against members—anything to rob the mind of memory, as you read when the seed was sown, “Then cometh the wicked one, and taketh away that which was sown in their hearts.” This is a second attempt.

3. He will raise up some one of his own family, who shall go so far in counterfeiting the experience of a child of God, that it is hard work to find out the difference. It will stagger us, and we shall often conclude they certainly are the people of God, insomuch “that, if it were possible, they would deceive the very elect;” and so you read: “Then comes this enemy, and sows tares among the wheat, and goes his way;” and Christ tells you plainly, “The enemy that sowed them was the devil.” This is the third attempt.

4. You shall find these tares so devout in prayer, in singing so lively, in hearing so affected, as to shed tears; they are all love with the mouth; and, as they are constant at all this, it is called “presenting themselves to God,” as Paul says believers ought to do: “I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.” But what do you read in the book of Job? “When the sons of God came before the Lord, Satan came also to present himself;” and there is plenty of it in our day—Satan presenting himself before the Lord in hypocrites. This is a fourth attempt.

5. Did you never find this also? You shall sit down with a desire in your heart to read; but, before you have been long at it, Satan will bring to your mind some object you have seen in the day. You shall faintly pray against it; but you find this object comes stronger in your thoughts—the way, the walk, the countenance, or something holds you fast, and you cannot resist—nor do you wish. Well, after this, your carnal affections go after the object so strongly that prayer gets weaker and weaker; at last, you give it all up, and fall a prey to some vile imagination, that was first stirred up by this object presented to your mind. Well, after this sad slip, guilt rolls in and dejection of spirits; slavish fear and unbelief; the intercourse with heaven is stopped, and a coldness takes place. Now this is the fifth attempt; as you read, “Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed; and when lust is conceived it bringeth forth sin, and when sin is finished it bringeth forth death.”

6. When God is searching our hearts and trying our reins—that we may know our lost and undone state by nature—when we feel his anger against us for our sins, and are conscious that with-

out forgiveness we shall be damned—the Lord will sometimes let us feel terror from a broken law, that we may be brought to despair of all hope and help from that quarter. We now tremble at God's word, and dread the execution of his sentence. Then come in several passages of Scripture, such as: "A fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation;" and "His own iniquities shall take him, and he shall be holden with the cord of his sins;" "If they fall away, it is impossible to renew again them to repentance." I say, such texts, and many more, will come in, and we think they come from God to us, whereas not one of them is in the least degree against a sensible sinner. For instance, the fiery indignation of God is to devour the "adversaries." But a sensible sinner is not an adversary; it is the hypocrite or wicked man that is to be holden with the cords of his sin. Falling into sin is not falling away; by no means, for such never come back. Now, if these came from God, the Lord would bring this judgment on us; but instead of that, we find, after a while, it is all purged away. Now, I have found these texts after the greatest discoveries of God's love and tender mercy to my soul, and have in time been delivered from them; and I think they come from Satan, as you read, "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord;" "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee." It is called also "the snare of the fowler."

7. The next attempt is to raise up preachers to preach the letter of the gospel. They will preach election, justification by faith, salvation by grace, imputed righteousness, the perseverance of the saints, and talk something like experience. These things often puzzle and perplex the children of God; and as Satan is transformed, these Satan's ministers are transformed into the likeness of ministers of righteousness. But seeing they go so far, a question naturally arises, which is this: "How shall I know a minister of Satan that goes so far from a minister of Christ?" This I will answer in these five things, which if you ever found come to you under the word of God preached, are proofs that the man is sent from God according to Scripture.

1. Suppose you were a carnal, worldly man, or a hypocrite in a profession, but still one of God's elect, and God's time is come to bring you to yourself and to himself. You shall go under the word preached, and you shall find all your past life and hypocrisy laid open, all the hidden evils of your heart discovered; sin shall be to you exceedingly sinful, you are sure that God is acquainted with all your ways, and you tremble at his word; your mouth is stopped, the word comes home, and conscience says, "Thou art the man;" then that preacher is sent of God to you, and you are enabled to fall under all the charges. Now what does Paul say, "If one prophesy, and there come into your assembly an ignorant and unlearned man, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all, and the thoughts of his heart are made manifest, so that he will fall

down and worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth." This is the first proof.

2. After hearing the word preached several times, and having deeper and deeper discoveries of your lost estate, you shall, under the same preacher, at another time, find your grief assuaged, and your heart supported and encouraged to hope for better days. Now, "this is a word in due season to him that is weary." But who could speak this home to the heart? Not the preacher, but Christ, for he has "the tongue of the learned."

3. After this you shall find yourself sink again. The burden of sin is felt heavier and heavier, as David says: "A sore burden, too heavy for me." Well, in this state you go and hear the word, and find it suitable; it is attended with power, and the burden of sin is removed; rest and peace come into your conscience in the room of it. What preaching can you call this? "Why, the forgiveness of sins," say you. Well, and as it was pardon sealed, then he "sent his word and healed you;" you came labouring and heavy laden, and found rest.

4. You are afraid you are deceived after all; you think perhaps the burden may have gone off the wrong way, and feel yourself accused and condemned in your conscience; but you come and hear the word preached, and somehow or other, while the preacher is preaching the imputed righteousness of Christ, and describing the blessed effects of it from his own experience, you find faith in exercise, so that you can take it all to yourself; and your accusers depart, condemnation goes away, and you believe and are justified. Paul says to this, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ," for "therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." Here is firm footing.

5. You shall find one thing lacking, and that is, slavish fear will be very much felt at times, neither can you, because of this, comfortably claim God as your covenant God and Father. But after sitting under the word sometimes, faith will be so strong that you will be able to do this under a spirit of meekness and self-loathing; and Paul calls this "perfecting that which was lacking in their faith." Now, if you have found these five things, in a greater or less degree, from the word preached, it is plain that the man must be sent of God, for "where the word of a king is, there is power."

First. Power to convince of sin, called the power of his anger.

Secondly. Power to support your heart: "Kept by his mighty power."

Thirdly. Power to pardon you.

Fourthly. Power to justify you.

Fifthly. Power to perfect you in love.

But if there is none of this, what says the Scripture? "They run, but I have not sent them; therefore they shall not profit the people at all," but will perplex and confuse them, as before observed.

(To be concluded in our next.)

THE RENT VAIL OF THE TEMPLE; OR, ACCESS TO
THE HOLY OF HOLIES BY THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BY RALPH ERSKINE.

(Continued from page 296.)

IV. The *fourth* thing, For what *end* was the *vail* rent? I shall tell you only these two ends of it: 1. That Christ might enter into the holiest as our High Priest for us. 2. That we might enter in also after him and through him.

1. I say, the *vail* of the temple was rent, that Christ our glorious High Priest might enter into the holy of holies in our name. I told you that the *vail* of the temple was that which parted betwixt the holy place and the most holy, and which kept off the people from drawing near to the most holy place. This *vail* was for concealment, and none might enter within the *vail* but the high priest; and he was not to enter in without blood, the blood of the sacrifice, along with him, as you see in Heb. ix. 3—7. Now, the most holy place was a type of heaven; so our Lord Jesus Christ having shed his own blood, entered within the *vail* into heaven, the true Holy of Holies, carrying in with him the blood of his own sacrifice: "Not by the blood of goats and of calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place." (Heb. ix. 12.) Not that Christ did carry into heaven his own substantial blood in his hand; we are not to understand it so carnally; but that in a spiritual sense, and virtually, he did so. Under the law, the day of atonement was upon that day when the high priest went into the holy of holies. (Lev. xvi. 12.) On that day the people were typically pardoned all their sins, and cleansed from all their transgressions; when the high priest had been within the *vail* in the holy of holies, then was the atonement made. Though the blood was shed without the camp, yet the atonement was not made till it was brought into the holy place. (Lev. xvi. 14, 15.) What did this typify, but that our atonement was perfectly made upon Christ's going into the Holy of Holies, namely, heaven? "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." (Heb. ix. 24.) Perhaps you have thought hitherto that the work of our redemption was perfectly completed on the cross, so that there was no more to be done; but know, it was not enough for the sacrifice to be killed without the camp, but the blood must be carried into the holy of holies; all was not done till that was done. Indeed, when Christ died the sacrifice was slain, the blood was shed; there was no more sacrifice to succeed; all was finished in that respect; but yet all was not done until, the true *vail* being rent as well as the typical, the blood of Christ was carried into the holy place within the *vail*—that is, into heaven. Though Christ did not personally ascend to heaven, as I said in the explication, till above forty days after, yet he immo-

diately acquired a right to enter, and had a virtual admission; so that his entrance began in his death; and when he ascended into heaven, he completed and perfected that in his own person in the true holy of holies, heaven itself, which the high priest did typically in the figurative holy of holies, which was of old under the law in the earth: and there hath Christ, in the power and virtue of his blood, made atonement; and as the high priest did under the law, he carried in with him the names of all the tribes of Israel on his breast, and by the power of this blood of the sacrifice made a full atonement. But then,

2. Another end of rending the veil was, not only that He might make a way for himself, as our Priest, into the most holy place, but that he might make a way for us in him, that we might enter in also, and have access to God through him, access to heaven through him. See, therefore, how the believer is said to follow in after Christ into the holiest within the veil. They are said to flee for refuge to the hope set before them, "which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, entering into that within the veil, whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. vi. 19, 20.) "We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." (Heb. x. 19, 20.) Where our way to heaven, or to the Holiest, is said to be through the blood of Christ, or, which is all one, through his flesh offered as a propitiatory sacrifice, by which, as by the rent veil, we have to enter. Now, this entrance into the Holiest, or access to God, that we have in Christ, is twofold, either inchoative here, or consummate hereafter.

First. There is an initial, inchoative, or begun entrance that we have into the Holiest in time. In the most holy place were the golden censer and other symbols of God's presence and glorious majesty; and access thereto was typical of our access to God and heaven; which access we have now with boldness even in time, through the rent veil by which our High Priest hath entered into the holy place: "Seeing, then, that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace." (Heb. iv. 14, 16.) And so it is inferred from this same doctrine: "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith." (Heb. x. 22.)

Question. What is that nearness to God and access to him, that a man hath in time, when he is brought within the veil?

Answer. In a word, it lies not only in the first application of grace, and change of the man's state, when in Christ Jesus he that is afar off is made nigh by the blood of Christ; for, whenever the virtue of that blood comes upon us by the Spirit of Christ, God comes near to us, and we are brought near to God; but there is still more and more nearness enjoyed by his people.

Exercised Christians are able to give a distinct account of their having this nearness at some times, and of their want of it at other times. He may be suspected, indeed, for a hypocrite that hath no changes, (Psal. lv. 19;) for the true Christian's sky is never long clear and without clouds; change of weather and change of way are usually found by travellers to heaven. Every believer, indeed, hath still the Spirit of Christ dwelling in him; for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his;" but there are some singular outpourings of the Spirit promised and bestowed, and well known by all believers; and they are precious enjoyments: "This Spirit the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him," says Christ; "but you know him, for he dwells with you, and shall be in you." (John xiv. 17.)

This access to God within the veil is sometimes experienced in prayer; yea, most frequently in that exercise is the light of God's countenance lifted up, and the soul made to say, "I love the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplication." Do not ye, believers, know this, that sometimes you have been so troubled that you could not speak? (Psal. lxxvii. 4.) that your hearts have been so bound and straitened, that you could do nothing and say nothing before the Lord, but sat as dumb and oppressed, all dark above, all dead within, and all doors shut upon you? You durst not neglect prayer, and yet you could not perform it. But, behold! you have quickly found the two-leaved gates cast open to you; your hearts enlarged, and mouths wide opened in asking; the windows of heaven open, and the banks of the river of life broken down, and the streams gushing in upon you, like that in Isa. xlv. 3.: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground."

Also, this access to God within the veil is sometimes experienced in sweet communion and fellowship with God: "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." This communion with God is a mystery, sweet indeed to them that have it, and surpassing all the delights of sense and reason; but to them that have it not it is incredible and unintelligible; a stranger intermeddles not with this joy. You that know not what it is, although the word be full of suitable and savoury expressions of it, yet it is a riddle and dark parable to you; it is only tasting of it that can declare its transcendent sweetness: "O, taste and see that the Lord is good!" You that know what it is, though you cannot express it, yet you can relish and understand some sound words about it. It may be you feel it sometimes in the secret retirements of the house, sometimes in the fields, or under a bush, as Nathanael under the fig-tree; but what you felt you cannot make the world understand; only when the Lord directs the minister to speak somewhat suitably to it, then you are ready to think, O it is just like the thing I felt at such a time and place; that which the minister is saying from God's word, hath a sweet sound of that which I got yonder, when none in all the world heard me or saw me: "But (Nathanael) when thou wast under the fig-tree I saw

thee," says Christ; "I heard you groaning to me, I saw you wrestling with me; I put your tears in my bottle, and poured my comforts into your soul." O! know you what it is to be brought near to him, and to have the clouds and veils that are on your hearts, or on your faces, scattered, and the light of his countenance lifted up upon you? Have you not been sometimes on the mount, so as to think, "O how good is it to be here!" Have you not known what the warm and healing beams of the Sun of Righteousness upon you are? Have you not tasted that in his company which hath made all the wells of worldly comfort, like puddle water, loathsome and unsavoury to you; yea, that hath made you groan in this tabernacle, and long to be at that complete and uninterrupted communion above, whereof all you tasted on earth is but a small earnest. However, the veil was rent, that you might enter within the veil into the Holiest, to a begun heaven in time. Grace being the same specifically with glory, there is but a gradual difference; and therefore the believer even on earth is said to be "come to mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to the innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the First-born that are written in heaven, to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." (Heb. xii. 22, 23.) Why, when does the believer come to all this? Even when he comes by faith to "Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling," then he is come to heaven itself, the true Holy of Holies inchoatively, or by a begun entrance. But,

Secondly, There is a consummative entrance into the Holiest, that the believer shall have, as a fruit of the rending of the veil, and that is when he comes to the heaven above, to the higher house, "whither the Forerunner is for us entered," having rent the veil, which was rent that we might have access to God in glory as well as in grace; and then the believer will not be half in, as it were, but completely within the veil; for then will his communion with God be completed, then his knowledge of God, his love to God, his delight in God, his vision of God's glory, his conformity to God's image, will all be complete; for "that which is in part shall be done away, and that which is perfect shall be come." O! what a sweet exchange will that be, when faith will say to vision, I give place to you; when hope will say to fruition, I give place to you; when grace will say to glory, I give place to you; when partial communion will say to perfection, I give place to you; when short, passing glimpses* will say to uninterrupted everlasting joys, I give place to you! Little wonder, then, that believers long to be wholly within the veil, (but I insist not on it;) for then indeed he fully enters into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus.

Thus you see the two great ends for which the veil was rent, namely, that a way might be made for Christ entering into the Holy

* Glimpses, glances.

of Holies, and so for our entering in also through him, and after him.

V. The *fifth* thing, viz., the *application*. Is it so, that Christ hath by his death rent the veil interposed betwixt God and us, and which obstructed our access to him? Then, first, for *information*: hence we may see,

1. What a full feast of love we have to feed upon on a communion-day, namely, the love of Christ, not only in dying, but in rending the veil, that he might enter into the holiest for us. The apostle says that "Christ loved us;" and how does he prove it? "He gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." (Eph. v. 2.) This savoury and sweet-smelling sacrifice was the offering of incense; and where was the incense offered under the law? Why, it was offered within the veil. God tells Moses that Aaron should take his handful of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil. (Lev. xvi. 12.) Now, Christ having given himself an offering and sacrifice to God without the camp in this world, rends the veil, and goes to heaven, and offers himself as incense within the veil. Perhaps you have seen and thought upon the love of Christ, in his dying upon the cross, in his making himself a sacrifice; but, O! see his love also in his incense within the veil! We feed too sparingly upon Christ, and therefore our faith is weak; we eat for the most part of but one dish, Christ, as the paschal Lamb slain on the cross. But we should learn to feed upon Christ as a Priest gone within the veil; our faith should not tarry on the cross, but we should carry it further, even after Christ within the veil, into heaven itself. Our faith should flee for refuge to lay hold upon all the hope that is set before us; the anchor of our soul will not be so sure and stedfast as it might be, except it enter within the veil. (Heb. vi. 19.) As the apostle says of patience, "Let it have its perfect work," so we say of faith, Let it have its perfect work; let us follow Christ within the veil, and view him, not only shedding his blood, but entering into the holy of holies within the veil, and sprinkling his blood upon the mercy-seat and before it. (Lev. xvi. 15.) The priests under the law sprinkled the mercy-seat, which was within the veil, all over; and when Christ went to heaven within the veil he did that in substance which the priests did in ceremony, in order to make a full atonement. And when faith is acted upon all this, then the believer is said to be come to the blood of sprinkling. And faith reaches not far enough when it goes no further than the death of Christ; for the atonement was not actually perfected, though it was made fundamentally, on the cross, yet not formally, till upon the rending of the veil, our High Priest entered into the holy place, and sprinkled the mercy-seat with his blood; by which act mercy and justice are actually met, and kiss each other.

2. If the veil of the temple be rent, we may hence see the glory of the New Testament dispensation beyond that of the Old; the veil

of the covering is rent, the darkness of that dispensation removed by the death of Christ, and Old Testament mysteries unveiled; so that now he that runs may read the meaning of them. Now, we see clearly that the mercy-seat signified Christ, the great propitiation; the pot of manna signified Christ the Bread of Life. Now we all with open face behold the glory of the Lord as in a glass, which helps the sight as the veil hindered it. And the veil of the temple being rent, it may give us ground further to expect that the veil shall be taken away from the hearts of the Jews; for "even to this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their hearts; nevertheless, when they shall turn to the Lord the veil shall be taken away." (2 Cor. iii. 15.)

3. If by the death of Christ the veil be rent that interposed betwixt God and us, we may hence see which is the way to heaven, and what access we have this way: "We have boldness to come to the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by that new and living way, that he hath consecrated through the veil." We may come boldly to the throne of grace, for the veil is rent; by the blood of Jesus the way is open. How shall the unholy of sinners venture to come into the holiest of all, or into God's presence? Yea, says the Holy Ghost, by the blood of Jesus, by the rent veil. There are many mistakes about the way to the holy place; it is a dreadful thing to think that many who have heard the gospel it may be ten, twenty, or thirty years, if they be asked of the way to heaven will say, "Why, if we do justly, live honestly and civilly, and do as we would be done to, we shall surely be saved." But I tell you, you shall surely be damned if no more be done. O! sad, that after all the light that hath shined about the way of salvation by the slain Son of God, that civility which is to be found among heathens is all the title that a great many have to eternal life! Others hope to get to heaven by a better righteousness, but it is a righteousness of their own; they say they will do as well as they can; they must read, and pray, and hear, and the like, and so they find out a way to heaven for themselves. Some cannot endure to hear anything spoken against self-righteousness, as if no person were in danger to be ruined by it, whereas this is a great part of the strong man's armour, whereby he keeps possession of souls. I tell you, sirs, your false righteousness is so far from being the way to heaven, that true holiness itself is but the business that people have to do who are in the way; there will never be another way to heaven but Christ; holiness is but the walk, Christ is the way in which we walk: "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord so walk ye in him." (Col. ii. 6.) "I am the way, no man cometh to the Father but by me." This is the new and living way, consecrated through the veil. The veil of the temple is rent, and the way to the holiest lies through the rent veil. Every person thinks that it is very hard to get to heaven, and that it will cost a great deal of time, and pains, and struggling. "But," says one, "here is the mischief of it; people do not know that it is hard to know the way to heaven, and that flesh and blood cannot reveal it, till God himself send in a beam of light upon the heart,

and give the Spirit of revelation in the knowledge of Christ, who is the way, having by his death rent the veil."

* * * * *

Use second, for *examination*. Try what interest you have in this mercy. If the veil be actually rent from the top to the bottom with respect to you, try whether or not you have gone in within the rent of the veil of the temple to the holy of holies. The veil was rent fundamentally when Christ gave up the ghost; it was rent formally when he entered into the holiest. The veil is rent objectively, in the preaching of this gospel; and now the question is, if the veil be rent subjectively, and so as you have the actual saving benefit of it in your own person. It is not enough that the veil is rent doctrinally for you, so as you have liberty to go into the holy place; but whether is the veil rent effectually to you and in you, so that you have stepped into the holiest by the rent veil? And,

1. If you be a believer indeed, in whom the veil is savingly rent, then you have got a good humbling sight and sense of the veil that interposed betwixt God and you, and have seen yourself to be without the veil. Did you ever see such a veil of wrath on God's part, and such a veil of guilt on your part—such a veil of a broken law, incensed justice, and injured holiness, on the one hand; and such a veil of sin, darkness, unbelief, and enmity on the other hand—as hath made you to despair that either the veil would be rent by you or any creature in heaven or earth, and made you to see yourself lost and undone, crying out, "Men and brethren, what shall I do to be saved?" Did you never see your sad state, as having a black veil standing up betwixt God and you? The exercise of persons about religion is suspicious, if they never saw the veil. Some will say, "O, I have seen many evils about me, and I have an evil heart!" But I ask, man, did you never see yourself to be in an evil state, in a state of distance from God by reason of the veil that was betwixt him and you? The effectual rending of the veil begins here, namely, at a humbling sight of the separating veil; the man sees himself without the veil, and so within the flood-mark of God's wrath.

2. If the veil be effectually rent in you, then you have seen the glory of him that rent the veil, and in the glory of God through the rent veil something of the glory of God in Christ. The apostle tells us in Heb. x. 19. 20., that "Christ's flesh," that is, his human nature, is the veil for us to enter by to the holy of holies; that is, heaven, or God's presence, God's face; so that in his flesh, or human nature of Christ, we may see the very face, the very brightness of the glory of God as in a mirror. Now, if the veil be rent in you, and the face of the covering removed, then you have seen the glory of God in Christ; you have seen God's law fulfilled by him, God's justice satisfied in him, God's holiness vindicated by him, and so God's righteousness declared in the way of saving sinners through him as the propitiation in blood. Have you seen his glory as the only way to heaven, as God's way to you and your way to God, as the Render of the veil on God's part and on yours?

—the glory of his death in the value and virtue of it: in the value of it, for rending the veil that hindered God's access to you; and in the virtue of it, for rending the veil within you that hindered your access to God? Have you felt something of this virtue in rending the veil of darkness and ignorance that was upon your understanding, and shining in upon you with the light of life? The effectual rending of the veil makes a man see some glory that is within the veil; have you seen God's glory, then, through the rent veil, and that God's glorious attributes are all glorified to the highest in this way?

3. If the veil be effectually rent, then you have cast "the anchor of your hope within the veil. (Heb. vi. 18, 19.) After your soul, like a weary vessel tossed upon the waves of convictions, fears, terrors, could find no rest, God hath brought you at last into this haven of rest, to cast anchor within the veil: "You have fled for refuge to the hope set before you; which hope you have as your anchor, sure and stedfast, entering into that within the veil, whither the Forerunner hath entered." Whither did you flee for refuge, when the law and justice of God were pursuing you for your debt, when they were ready to condemn you to hell prison? Were you then made to flee for refuge to the Surety that God set before you for paying your debt, and to say, "Lord, take bail of thy own Son for me? I despair of ever answering such a charge of justice and the law against me; and let *that* answer the charge." When Christ entered into the holiest within the veil, with his blood he sprinkled the mercy-seat; and when the soul takes hold of this blood and righteousness of Christ, as the ground of his acquittance from the charge of justice, then he casts "anchor within the veil."

4. If the veil be effectually rent for you, then surely you cannot but have a superlative love for that glorious High Priest who by his death rent the veil, and went into the holiest for you. O, can you say with Paul, "He loved me, and gave himself for me?" Or can you say with Peter, "Thou that knowest all things knowest that I love thee?" Surely they that love him not know nothing yet savingly about the rending of the veil. It may be some love him, and dare not so confidently say it as Peter did; but if you can say Amen to two texts of Scripture, we may warrant you that you love him indeed. The one is a sad text: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be *anathema maranatha*." (1 Cor. xvi. 22.) The true lover of Christ can say, "Amen; let them be even cursed that do not love him and shall not love him." They can say Amen to that now; they shall sit at Christ's right hand at the great day, and say Amen to the sentence of the great Judge: "Depart from me, ye cursed." The other is a great text, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." (Rev. v. 12.) The true lover of Christ can say "Amen: worthy, worthy is the Lamb to receive all the praises of all the redeemed to all eternity!" They that can set the amen of faith to this now, have begun to join with the triumphant company already within the veil; and they shall join with

them for ever hereafter, saying, "Salvation to our God that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever!" Indeed, if you love Christ at all, you love him with a superlative love: above husband, wife, children, lands, houses, goods, and worldly comforts. You do not love him at all if you do not love him above all. And if you love him at all, the veil is rent, and you have got into the holiest in part: and if you will have patience, yet a little while you shall get in fully.

5. If the veil be effectually rent, then all the veils on your part that continue to separate betwixt God and you are matter of sad regret to you. The veil of indwelling sin and corruption, the veil of darkness and ignorance, the veil of remaining enmity, the veil of unbelief, these are all whole and entire in the unregenerate; and though in believers these veils be rent, yet they are not removed. Regenerating grace hath given them a rent that shall never be sewed up or healed again; but yet, alas! they are remaining veils within the believer while here; though they be rent, yet they hang there, and many times sadly separate betwixt God and him: and hence he cries, "O! wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" O! to be above corruption! O! to be within the veil, that I may see him as he his and be like unto him! O! when shall all veils be removed? when "shall the day break, and the shadows flee away?" O! when shall the curtain be taken down? Christ stands behind the curtain, and does not manifest himself. Hath he been a veiled Christ at this communion? Then I am sure, believer, your heart will be saying, "O that the curtain were drawn! O that the veil were rent into ten thousand pieces!"

(To be concluded in our next.)

MEMOIR OF THE LATE J. HIRST.

(Concluded from page 305.)

Mr. Hirst proceeds, "Though many now considered me a Calvinist, I was as yet far from having embraced that system. Of this the following fact will be a sufficient testimony. Having to preach at —, I was informed that a Baptist minister was coming to hear me. I resolved to exert all my talents to overthrow his sentiments. I said all I could against the doctrine of election, chiefly by way of reproach, loading it with monstrous and horrible inferences and consequences. The minister let me pass without reproof or correction, but God did not.

"Having to walk about three miles home, I had time to reflect on what I had been doing. I was powerfully convinced that I had been speaking against a doctrine which I had never considered or examined, and therefore my conduct was highly criminal, whether the doctrine were true or false. My spirit sank within me. I felt deep remorse, and, I hope, godly sorrow and true repentance before God. I took the first opportunity of searching

my Bible, and made use of the best means in my power to understand it, with prayer to God to enlighten my mind that I might not be deceived. By reading the epistles of Paul to the Romans and Ephesians I saw my error, and stood convicted of having blasphemed the truth and sovereignty of God. I wept and trembled in his presence. I could not forbear crying, 'Wretch that I am, thus to speak against my Maker and my Judge! Has not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? and has not the Sovereign of the Universe a right to bestow his favours on whom he pleases, and have mercy on whom he will have mercy? If I am not by grace chosen in Christ to salvation, I never can be saved. And dare I conclude that I am interested in electing love, when I have been trampling the doctrine under my feet, and representing it as the offspring of hell and nurse of licentiousness?'

"Notwithstanding I was now thoroughly convinced of the truth of election, I found my heart rise against it, because I knew it would set the Methodists against me, whom I dearly loved. Finding opposition in my mind to so plain a truth, I was again brought to the brink of despair. It now became my daily prayer that, whatever might be my lot in this world, God would enable me to love the truth for the truth's sake. In a few weeks, the beauty, the grace, and the glory of the doctrine of election appeared to my understanding with such convincing efficacy, that I became fully persuaded, as I remain to this day, that election is the doctrine of the Bible, and that there can be no salvation without it. Even after this experience, (I record it with shame,) I felt inclined to conceal my views from the people, for fear of giving them offence. Not long, however, after this event, the superintendent thought proper to exclude me from their connexion.

"The charge brought against me was, that I sought to circumvent and undermine the characters of the preachers. At this time of life I cannot be thought to write under any prejudice or evil bias against the people, but I must declare that this charge was absolutely false and groundless. This exclusion was in the year 1766. To be separated from a people I so dearly loved proved a great affliction to me. Had I not been cast out for what appeared to me the truth of God, my grief would have been insupportable.

"I was now like a sparrow alone upon the house-top. I appeared as a speckled bird, with which others would not assemble. I longed for the communion of saints, but was at a loss where to find agreeable connexions. But though forsaken by many of my friends, yet the Lord did not forsake me. He still disposed people to hear me preach, and I continued once a month to visit Deanhead in Walsden, where I had preached when in connexion with the Methodists, and I preached at my own house on the other Lord's days. In a few months I was brought acquainted with the friends at Accrington, of the Baptist denomination. This acquaintance commenced by means of a person from Accrington coming as a servant into the works I superintended. He being of the Baptist

persuasion, the ordinance of baptism was introduced at times in our conversation. Its nature, subjects, and mode, being conspicuously and plainly revealed in the New Testament, and my mind being open to conviction, I was soon convinced of its divine original, and exceedingly pleased with its appointment and signification, so that in a little time I joined the Baptist church at Accrington, then under the pastoral care of Mr. Charles Bamford. This was in 1767."

Of Mr. Hirst's connexion with the Methodists, and of his leaving them and joining the Baptists, I find him elsewhere giving a more brief account, which, by comparison, may serve to correct or corroborate the preceding. It is contained in a letter.

Mr. Hirst therein observes, "My first knowledge of salvation by grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, I received from the Arminian Methodists, upon which account I entered among them. My little acquaintance with the religious world led me to think that they were the only spiritual people of God in the world. In process of time I began to exercise my gift among them, and became one of their local preachers. Hereupon they soon perceived that I differed from them in my sentiments, particularly in the article of justification, which I held forth as being by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, and received by faith.

"This doctrine I had received from the word of God alone, but knew not that I differed from them herein. Being greatly grieved to find that I did not agree with those whom I esteemed as the precious sons of Zion, I repaired to my God and to my Bible, hoping, if I was wrong, I should here be set right. Instead, however, of finding my opinion erroneous, I became more confirmed that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. I kept close to the word of God, having little other help, except a few books written by the puritans and nonconformists. By these I began to see a glimpse into the doctrines of particular election, and particular redemption, efficacious or invincible grace in regeneration, the saints' final perseverance, &c. Our difference now began to be wider, and my grief increased proportionably. In order to please in my preaching, I sometimes endeavoured to omit or conceal the points of difference, and then my conscience galled me in a painful manner.

"Not being able to conceal my views, I was at last separated from the society. I was now very greatly distressed. Where to find a pious people of my own sentiments I knew not. I had indeed heard of the Baptists; but as they were generally charged with having but little heart religion, I gave myself no concern about them. However, providentially falling into company with one of that persuasion, and conversing freely on their sentiments, on the ordinance of baptism, and their church order, I was soon convinced that they had Bible authority for their warrant. Though

I still formed a mean opinion of their practical piety, I thought it my duty to join them. I am therefore at this time a strict Calvinistic Baptist.

“When I joined the Baptists, I was firmly persuaded that they professed the doctrines of faith and holiness according to the sacred Scriptures; but I thought the Methodists a much more excellent people in point of experience and practice. The Calvinists I concluded had better sentiments, but the Arminians better hearts and lives. This mistake was speedily rectified. I had not been long among the Baptists before I found myself to be a mere babe in religion in comparison with them, who were indeed fathers in Christ and in Israel. I shall be everlastingly thankful to God for leading me among them, and for the good I have received by their means.

“Soon after I became a member of the church I was invited to preach before them, that they might judge of my abilities for the ministry. They heard me, and thought proper to encourage the exercise of my talents, and gave me their unqualified approbation and authority to preach wherever I might be invited. There were a few members belonging to the church at Accrington who resided near Chorley, in Lancashire. I was appointed to preach for them one Lord’s day in a month. I also spent one Lord’s day in four at Deanhead, in Walsden, about half way between Todmorden and Rochdale, where I had preached when a Methodist. These, with Accrington and my own house, near Edenfield, kept me employed nearly every Lord’s day. After I had begun to preach regularly among the Baptists, I had a pressing invitation to visit Brosely in Shropshire; but as I continued still to superintend a considerable concern in the woollen manufactory, I was not permitted or at liberty to comply with the invitation.

“In the year 1769 the Lord was pleased, by means of a fever, to remove from me my affectionate and industrious wife, and I was left with five small children, the oldest little above nine years old, and the youngest about fifteen months. This was a heavy trial to me, but the Lord did not forsake me. He was pleased to support me under it. In reflection I have reason to bless God that he did not suffer me to be overtaken, so as to be overcome by any temptation. What he permitted he enabled me to bear to the honour of his holy name.”

None of the changing scenes of divine providence experienced by Mr. Hirst interrupted his ministerial services. As the cares of his family during his widowhood devolved wholly upon himself, the claims of his children on his attention might have furnished an excuse for declining his itinerating labours, especially when it is remembered that the remunerations he received never exceeded, but often fell short of his travelling expenses. His labours were truly labours of love to the precious souls of men. He was subject to great disadvantages and difficulties in preaching the gospel. The places which he visited were many of them from ten to twenty

miles distant from his residence. Great responsibility attached to his situation as a servant, as the care of a large share of the concern in which he was employed devolved upon him. His masters having tried him, put great confidence in his abilities and integrity, and required him at his post from Monday morning to Saturday night. He was therefore obliged to redeem his time for study chiefly from the hours which others devoted to rest; and to set out early on a Lord's day morning to the place of preaching, and to return home after the services of the day. The love of Christ and of precious souls constrained him to these uncommon exertions. Though he loved to preach, he knew it would not provide bread for his children; and therefore he was "not slothful in business," as well as "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." He may be regarded as an example of diligence and fidelity to servants, and as a pattern to preachers in his disinterested and unwearied exertions. On Mondays he generally attended the market at Rochdale, to make purchases of pieces, wool, &c.; and sometimes in the evening he would ride several miles out of his way home, to preach the gospel to poor sinners. His situation often threw him into the company of men who would lay snares for him, and try whether his religion was proof against the temptations of a sumptuous dinner, a free bottle, and merry company. Mr. Hirst by divine grace was enabled to withstand every attack. He endured the test, and evinced his religion to be of God.

The subject of this memoir continued for years after his baptism to be employed in the concerns of business, and yet he seized every opportunity in his power of preaching the gospel to his fellow-sinners. In the summer of 1772, Mr. Joseph Piccop, the pastor of the Baptist church at Bacup, became unable to discharge the duties of his office by reason of heavy and continued afflictions. "The church," says Mr. Hirst, "applied to me for assistance. But there having been some differences between the church at Accrington and the church at Bacup, I was forbidden to help them till these differences had been adjusted.

"It was on the last Lord's day in June that I began to preach in the Baptist chapel at Bacup. I found the church in a very low and disordered state. Very few people had attended latterly upon the preaching of the word. But the very first day I officiated the chapel was filled."

Mr. Hirst felt the weight and importance of the work to which he was now called, and the great responsibility attached to his office. Notwithstanding his eminent talents, his long standing in the church, his many and successful labours, and the maturity of his years and experience, he entered upon the pastoral office under a strong conviction of his unfitness and unworthiness, and with fear and much trembling. Thus began the stated labours of John Hirst in the village of Bacup, to which he was so long and so eminently a blessing.

Mr. Hirst was subsequently appointed stated minister at Bacup. He remarks, "I entered upon the office with much self-diffidence.

My only confidence was in God, who has promised strength equal to the day. I have ever found God faithful, and he is yet my hope. The first time we sat down to the Lord's Table we had six added to the church, and, for sixteen years or more, we seldom administered the Lord's supper without an increase of members."

And here, so far as anything of Mr. Hirst's experience goes, the biographer stops, a fact which can be accounted for only by his own want of a gracious experience, and not understanding the exercises of a living soul. Perhaps Mr. Kershaw, to whom, I think, Mr. Hirst was known, can supply the deficiency. Mr. H. died in June, 1815, aged 79.

LET ALL THINGS BE DONE IN CHARITY.

Dear Sir,—In answer to your friendly letter, I must tell you I have written to Mr. W—, and I beg to refer you to a statement I have made, upon the approval of which depends in a great measure my coming to U—. I would move with God, if happily I had discernment at all times to perceive that he is moving. If this be a movement in the Lord's providence, he will direct my steps in answer to prayer. I am a fool indeed without Jesus of Nazareth, and too blind a fool to see it unless he comes and shows me where I am and what I am about. I sometimes share this portion: "Fools because of their transgression are afflicted;" and I am in this way brought to see the folly of trusting to, or delighting in anything but Jesus. I want to be one with him, and walk with him, if he would grant me the favour. I am dust, clay, and a worm in his hand. He is the Creator of this dust, the Sovereign of this clay, and the God of the worm Jacob. For his name's sake he saves sinners, of whom I am the chief. "Last of all, he was seen of me also."

Oh! could I keep my place among the children of God, I must be last of all; selfishness should have no place. Jesus Christ and he crucified should be all in all, first, and last, and centre, the glory and blessedness set forth before the eyes of the spiritual understanding of the house of Israel, unto whom it is given to believe and suffer for his sake. His church, which is his body, hath many members; but age, office, or standing in grace, alters not the relationship of those members. Truth, order, and harmony should mark the church: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Her creed and ordinances, walk and conversation, tell the world she is not of it, but chosen out of it, to "show forth the praises" of Jesus. Bought with a price, she is not her own property. But this dove of the valley sometimes falls into rough hands for her pride: "Thou shalt no more be haughty, because of my holy mountain:" "Thou shalt no more open thy mouth." What is man? We learn here a little about sin, a little about Christ, and know a little about ourselves; learn

that we are too bad to be trusted; learn the necessity of ceasing from man; learn that, next to the devil, man is his own enemy, stands in his own light, and is his own hindrance.

Let all things be done in charity; and then as many as walk according to this rule peace be on them. But what peace without union, and what union without truth in the inward parts, and what truth in the inward parts without Christ formed there the Hope of Glory? Man is born with a lie in his right hand, is a liar from his birth, a stranger to God from the womb: "Ye must be born again." When born again, a new creature, all things are become new—a new creature, a new name, and a new life. "I live by the faith of the Son of God," said the beloved apostle. All the sons of Abraham live by the same faith, and worship at Abel's altar: One sacrifice for sin—one faith in this one atonement. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." I hold sterling truth for truth's sake; and if I err from it, I desire to be set right.

One of the features of the present day is strife among brethren. In my right mind I will never sow discord among them, nor countenance the breaches of Christ's new commandment, which he gave to the church: "Love one another."

"Broken hearts and humble walkers,
These are dear in Jesus' eyes—"

and ought to be dear in ours.

I ramble on with my basket of fragments; if you can gather one, bless Jesus. All real gospel is Christ's gospel. Man might as well attempt to create another heaven as to create or make a gospel. The Living Word running through the preached word makes gospel; all short of this is short of all. "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me;" and "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." Amidst all my confusion, ignorance, blindness, and wretched unprofitableness, Jesus is the Christ—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Jacob—that Almighty Personage that appeared unto Moses at the bush, and said, "I am that I am." "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death;" this I can say, through divine favour, I believe with my heart; could I but live it in my life to his glory, it would be well, it would be living like a disciple. But alas! I am an awkward disciple; it is time I learned to bow my head, and blush for shame at my ignorance and vanity. May Jesus give us his fear and humility. "Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

May he who bore this cross love us into this death! May his resurrection power raise us up in his triumph, above the dead and dreary things of time! May his sorrows break our hearts! May his soft voice bring forth the responsive echo, Rabboni, in our hearts, until we see him as he is!

Farewell, dear friend in Jesus!

DYING WORDS.

My very dear Friend and Companion in tribulation's path,— Grace and peace be with thee, to help thee to fight on and be a good soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We have a great Captain, my friend; and the promise is to them that endure to the end—the same shall be saved. You may be ready to say, "I am afraid my trials will cause me to faint and give up." No, they will not; they are the very means that will cause you to endure. Prosperity might cause you to give up; but your trials keep you pursuing your dear Redeemer, who will make a way for your escape, that you may be able to bear whatever he in his wisdom sees fit to lay upon you. He is perfect wisdom, and knows what to exercise us with to get glory to himself. If we had our own way we should never glorify him for his delivering mercies. No, never; our trials are like ballast to a ship; rid the ship of her ballast out on the broad ocean, could she ever be brought into harbour? No captain would be so unwise as to undertake to manage her. And what would dear Mrs. K— be without ballast? yes, and Robert D— too? I am sure, for myself, that I should have no cry in my soul to my dear Redeemer to make haste to help me; "Make no tarrying, oh! my God:" "O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me."

The last ten days my soul has been bowed down with trial, a complication of trials, so that I have been frightened with them. But the Lord was very good to me, to give me a cry with them, and to keep me very humble; for when the trial came, I could soon say with dear Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;" yea, I believe I should if I were going to be burnt at a stake. I do humbly believe that he would enable me even then to glorify his great and glorious name. For the last ten days I have had to cry, supplicate, beg, and entreat day by day, and hour by hour: "Do Lord appear! do help! do have mercy! do show mercy! Thou hast been merciful, and kind, and good in times past, and thy mercies have followed me up to the present moment, although I deserve nothing; a poor back-sliding wretch that I am, I deserve nothing but to be frowned away from thee into black despair." I know not how it is, but under my greatest trials I am obliged to tell the Lord how merciful he has been in times past, and beg him to continue his blessings to me for his great mercy's sake. Oh! my dear friend, how many of our numerous mercies do we overlook!

This morning, before breakfast, I was out in one of our fields, about half-past six o'clock, and I thought how many thousands were looking out for the eclipse; and how little my heart was contemplating or thinking of Him that caused the eclipse—the dear Redeemer, who made heaven and earth, and upholds and manages all things, and has all things under his control. But I was led to go under a tree, and try to worship the great Eclipser, and pray that he would shine into my soul, that it might be a memorial for me to look back upon during the remainder of my

life; but the Lord did not then bless my soul. But this evening, in reading dear Hart, the ever-blessed Lord answered my prayer that I put up to him under the tree this morning. Oh! my dear friend, pray on; your prayers shall not prove vain. Our Joseph may turn aside to weep, but cannot long refrain. I have this evening again felt assured that the Lord will enable me to endure to the end.

"All things to us must work for good,
For whom the Lord has shed his blood."

"Trials may press of every sort,
They may be sore, they must be short."

"We now believe, but soon shall view
The greatest blessing God can show."

Oct. 11.—Yesterday I went to hear our dear friend, Mr. —, at A—, when the dear Lord again bedewed my soul under the dear man's ministry, so that tears ran down my face, and drop by drop fell on my clothes and the seat I sat on. Oh! my dear sister, how sacred, how consecrated are such places and such times! it is the very gate of heaven to our souls; this is true consecrated ground. What a mercy that you and I know such things and such places! they are true earnestness that we shall reach heaven by-and-by. Cheer up, "endure hardness like a good soldier;" fight on; we shall win the crown of Christ's righteousness; by-and-by it will be placed on our head; "Greater is he that is for us than all that are against us." Every fresh token of Christ's love is a proof of his future love. Erskine says, (which I have found good under desertion,) "What we have found Christ at our best, he is the same at our worst." Bless the dear Lord, though we are weary, he no variation knows.

I have of late thought how momentous a thing it is that we are now passing through our time state. Depend upon it, it is of wonderful moment; yet how little is it thought of! May the dear Lord impress our minds more with the great, grand, and solemn reality of the subject that we are born, and have to die; that we are regenerated; that here we have no continuing city, but are pilgrims seeking a better country; that here the Lord is continually undoing us that we may seek him. The more trials and the more deliverances, the more glory redounds to his great and glorious name. What would those now in glory, who suffered martyrdom to get there, say or think of us, if we came to them without a scar; they thought it an honour to suffer for his sake, and shall we repine? Mr. — said, yesterday, that a good man had said, and he believed it, that the dear Redeemer was nailed through hands and feet on the ground; they then reared the cross, and put it into a socket, where he was a spectacle to men and devils, and "as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth;" had he railed, had he repined, our great salvation would have been forfeited; but he did not. Bless his dear name! he was the meek and lowly Jesus, "the Lamb of God that took away our sins;" praised be his adorable name for ever and ever!

If one grain of blessed feeling has fallen on your spirit from my

scribble, give Jesus the praise, for to me belongs nothing but shame; "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy truth and mercy's sake." If I am too high for you, bear with me; I fear that my sins will soon bring me down. I find that it is sin that separates between me and my God. If I had no sinful body, I believe that I should be a happy man. This day I have felt the devil and sin pulling me one way, and grace in my heart another; and whichever is yielded to gets the victory. As we sow we reap, and bring mischief on our head by some unwary step: "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life and death." Give thyself to reading: the more I read, the more I pray; the more I pray, the more I seek; the more I supplicate, the more healthy I find my soul.

**"So gentle sometimes is the flame,
That if we take not heed,
We may unkindly quench the same;
We may, my friends, indeed."**

"Quench not the Spirit." I find I do hundreds of times. I acknowledge it, and speak of it to my shame. The dear Spirit of Jesus, the Holy Spirit, is a blessed Spirit, that cannot abide where sin is practised in any shape. I have ever found it so; but it is our mercy that he breaks through sin, and humbles and sanctifies our hearts by his operative effects. But I must forbear; I say not this to stumble you, but to assist you. Do not think me innocent, for I am truly guilty, guilty, guilty; and every time I go before the Lord I am obliged to confess my sins and base backslidings of heart, for I know if I cloke it over the Lord will not hear me; and I have ever found the way to get them pardoned is to confess them. Job says, "Who ever hardened himself and prospered?"

I hope you and your family are well. We are all well, through the Lord's mercy. My wife unites with me in kind love.

And believe me, yours affectionately,

Devizes, Oct. 9th, 1847.

R. DREDGE.

P. S. I shall be truly glad to hear from you. I thank you kindly for your last letter. I found it to warm my heart, and believe I have prayed for you scores of times since, in my poor simple way. May the Lord bless you, and sanctify every trial to you, and not let one pass without leaving a blessing, if his dear will. "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial," &c. You are not alone. "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." Since I wrote the above my wife and I have been laid up with influenza, but the Lord is kindly restoring us again. Since I wrote my letter I have had more treats and more sweet mercies. I must honour my dear Lord in speaking well of him. "Them that honour me I will honour;" ever bear this in mind, my dear and esteemed friend.

[This, we believe, was one of the last letters written by one now in glory. He died in rather more than a fortnight after the above letter was written, and made a most peaceful and blessed end.—Eds.]

“THOUGH YE HAVE LAIN AMONG THE POTS, YET SHALL YE BE AS THE WINGS OF A DOVE COVERED WITH SILVER, AND HER FEATHERS WITH YELLOW GOLD.”

Dearly Beloved in Christ,—Suffer me thus to address you, for so it becometh me to do, according to the real feelings of my soul,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you!

I have felt anxious for a length of time past for a little leisure from business to write to you, and more especially having heard from several quarters of your being so unwell in bodily health, but have not been thus favoured hitherto; therefore, not being enabled longer to refrain, I feel inwardly obliged, by the dear Lord's help, in face of all hindrances and opposition, now to attempt the pleasing task to write to you once again.

But why should such a foolish thing, a despised thing, a base thing, a poor contracted-minded thing, a sinful and worthless thing as I feel myself to be, find it a pleasing task to communicate with my dear friend? Have patience with me, my brother, and I will tell you in a few words how it is with me. I do feel it such a relief to my sin-burdened and sorrowful soul, when the Lord helps me in some little measure to unbosom my mind to him and to my friends, and to tell them of what great things the Lord has done for me, and how I do hate sin, and how it troubles me, and how I do love the dear Lord Jesus, and desire to love him more and serve him better, and how I do, at times, long to live and die his witness, and live and reign with him above. I say again, sometimes while thus helped from above to write on these things to my friends, or to commune with God in prayer, my mind is carried above men and things and all hindrances and oppositions so blessedly, and I am so comforted in the employ, that I do not think it presumption to say that it has thus often been made a pleasing task indeed to my soul. And therefore thus hoping now to enjoy somewhat of this blessedness in again writing to my friend, I do now throw my venturing self upon divine assistance, and so, with trembling, attempt to begin.

“Though ye have lain among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.” My soul, has not this been thy experience? Has not the Lord thus verified this his gracious promise in thee? How long have I lain among the pots with a witness? Ever since, I hope, I have been made alive by God the Spirit. And why do I believe I am made alive unto God? Because I cannot live without tasting, handling, and feeling for myself of Christ the good Word of Life; and these are signs of life. How oft have I striven, too, with the potsherds of the earth, to snuff up the east wind, to feed on husks, to fill myself with vanity; but God has overturned all my projects, crossed all my schemes, and disappointed all my designs and fair expectations to such a degree, that wrath and vexation of spirit

have filled my bosom with anger, and fretfulness, and disquietude beneath his chastening rod, until stroke after stroke has laid me groaning, with Job, at his feet, crying with him, "Behold, I am vile!" O! my brother, what a painful process it is to bring down a proud sinner's rebellious heart with hard labour, to bow with patience, and resignation, and submission to divine sovereignty! Nothing but almighty power can ever accomplish this work; and when it is so brought down it requires the same almighty grace to keep it there, or it would start aside, and wander from God into endless misery and woe, did not the walls of God's salvation, God's potent shalls and wills, for ever prevent his chosen from falling therein. Though ye have thus lain among the pots—the vessels made to dishonour, for whom the Master of the house has no use, among whose dead souls ye have slumbered and slept, and striven in vain—yet shall ye "be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold."

"Yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove." My soul trembles while I remember the bliss, the heavenly joy that I felt, when first I proved this promise true for myself. The wings of a dove figure forth a living faith in exercise. None but a living soul knows what a living faith is. Faith proceeds from the life of God wrought in the soul, and put and kept in motion there by the Holy Ghost, and is the light of the soul here until brought to light above. Divine life gave me spiritual feelings unknown and unfeelt before, and caused me to feel that I was a sinner, which made me groan and tremble beneath the terrors of Sinai's broken law. Here I was left, till God put in motion divine faith within my breast, and pointed my despairing eyes to Christ, the Refuge from the wrath to come. Wrath and terrors filled my conscience, but onward I sprang through felt necessity. "Refuge, refuge," was my inward cry, with wringing hands and bleeding heart. "Thou canst if thou wilt; Lord, save, or I perish; Lord, save me." Then the next act of faith which I felt was in atoning blood, which brought the blessing requested into my soul, pardoning mercy, and peace and joy in believing. Thus was this sweet promise fulfilled in me: "Yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold." And how many times I have with real joy of heart proved it true since then I cannot describe.

"The wings of a dove covered with silver." A dove is an emblem of Christ, of peace, and rest in him, and may figure forth a weary, sin-burdened, sorrowful, heavy-laden soul flying to him, Israel's spiritual Ark, for refuge, safety, peace, and rest. I have also fled to him as such, and have also thus proved him to be so to me again and again, and therefore do know somewhat of the blessedness contained in the assertion.

"Covered with silver." Silver is a precious and beautiful white metal or ore; so is faith pure and precious, and it is precious indeed to feel it in exercise within the breast covered with silver. Faith lays hold of Christ as the Wisdom of God and the Righteousness of God; and believes in the promises, and sparkles most

gloriously in his spotless and most glorious righteousness, with a lustre ten million times beyond that of the natural sun, and which to behold eclipses earth and all her vanities in the twinkling of an eye, and is sufficient to melt, and break, and cheer the hardest heart. This also my soul knoweth right well; for I have thus laid hold of a precious Christ by precious faith, and by faith thus have beheld his glory, and proved with joy unknown to worldlings the blessed effects thereof, and have triumphed most gloriously in the heavenly vision.

“And her feathers with yellow gold.” Feathers are given to the winged tribe for a covering, for strength and beauty, to enable them to fly; for were their wings without feathers they would be of but little service to them. So the faith of thousands will not do them any good in life or death, not being girt about with almighty power, nor ever be able to prevail with God, nor roll itself round in the righteousness of Christ, and bring the blessed effects down into the soul. Not so the faith of God’s elect. It is the life and power of God within a mortal’s breast; it is covered with the glories of its Author, Finisher, and Giver, which are more, far more glorious and precious than the gold of Ophir, than “yellow gold,” than much fine gold, or even life itself. Gold is the most durable and precious of all metals; so are the righteousness of Christ and his promises, in whose glory a living faith is covered, most durable, precious, and beautiful. No floods can wash it away, nor flames consume it, nor the wrath of men and devils rend it, nor sin tarnish it, nor death itself alter it. Its preciousness is beyond description, and the blessedness of a sensibly guilty sinner, feeling his whole self enrobed in this righteousness and girt around therein, exceeds the powers of men and angels ever to set forth. This I also know by experience, and do tremble in my very soul with joy while I record it. Gold is the richest of all colours; hence her feathers are covered, not only with silver, but with yellow gold. To possess and feel a precious Christ in the heart the Hope of Glory, is to possess and enjoy durable riches and righteousness. The exceeding riches of his grace only God’s exceedingly poor and needy family will be thankful for. So the never-ending and never-failing fulness, and the riches of his fulness, will best suit impoverished, bankrupt, empty, craving sinners; and of such am I. Christ enjoyed, and a crust, is rich fare; thus has he been to me. His love is better than wine; I have proved it so; for which, if a man would even give his body to be burned, it would be utterly contemned. The riches of his glory in Christ Jesus no uncircumcised heart can conceive; but the Spirit of God reveals the heavenly vision to faith, and by faith to the quickened soul; and he has to mine. So faith is eyes and hands as well as wings, to her favoured possessor, as before hinted at—yea, and feet too. She beholds the distant glories of Jesus, flies into the bosom of everlasting love, draws from his fulness, sings with the inhabitants of the rock, brings down the joyful report into the longing breast, and lives,

and walks, and talks with the God of heaven within the living soul, even when the tongue and lips do not move. This also has God made known to me by feeling experience. Blessed be God, therefore, for thus fulfilling his most gracious promise in me, although my soul has lain among the pots so long.

Upwards of twenty-one years I lay among the pots, dead in trespasses and sins, and should have hitherto lived, naturally, and died too in that state, had not God designed it otherwise. For nearly seven years since then, I lay among the pots, in a cold, becalmed, benumbed, lukewarm state of soul, which now makes me tremble to think of, out of which the dear Lord did deliver me, after I had endured stroke after stroke of his chastening rod, and he had enabled me to take hold of Job's words, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him," with such a power of soul that I shall never be able to express, and to overcome him by faith and prayer. And how many times I have lain among the pots since, it is impossible for me to say. Notwithstanding, the Lord having thus verified his promises in me so many times; he does thereby still encourage me to come to him, and groan out my complaints and requests to him, and still to hope in his mercy; nor do I believe I shall hope in vain.

"O that I had the wings of a dove, then would I fly away into the bosom of my best Beloved, and be at rest," sounds often through my troubled soul. Earth has lost its charms; vanity I see inscribed on all things below, sin becomes more and more embittered to me, and troubles me more every day I live; bitters and sweets, joy and sorrow, compound the unction that rests on my spirit. What a mystery and a wonder! I feel myself to be the greatest on earth, and I am sure there will be no greater wonder in heaven than I shall be, when once I am safe there. The changes I feel surprise me; and it astonishes me beyond measure to feel my hardness of heart depart, and my soul made tender, and humble, and contrite, and broken in tears of love, and joy, and peace at my dear Redeemer's sacred feet. But as time admonishes, and my many calls and hindrances trouble me, I must draw to a close.

"Though ye have lain among the pots, yet ye shall be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold." Enough, dear Lord; my soul believes it, and weeps in hope of the glory. Sorrowful, yet rejoicing, the fears of death do not now trouble me. I am troubled because of the workings of sin within, (though atoning blood applied has removed the monster's sting from my conscience,) and because my sins do so often separate between me and a precious Christ.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,

Bedworth, March 1, 1848.

G. T. C.

Sometimes, when I have thought I did no good by the sermons I have preached, then I did the most of all; and at other times, when I thought I should catch people, I have fished for nothing.—
Bunyan.

HE BEING DEAD, YET SPEAKETH.—No. II.

Dearly beloved Friend in the Lord, the only Hope of poor sinners,—Gratitude and Christian affection prompt me to write a few lines to you, if the dear Lord enable me; for I do assure you that I feel in and of myself quite inadequate for the undertaking, and I sit down empty, weak, and feeble. Sometimes I have felt my heart flowing with matter to you, which is a proof of my being present in spirit, though absent in body. O! my dear friend, what shall I then say? “Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all my days.” And now, can a worthless wretch like me set up an Ebenezer, and say, “Hitherto hath the Lord helped me?”

Since I last wrote a line to you, it has pleased the Lord to lay upon me heavy affliction of body; but it appears that his love was laid up in reserve for me for such a season.

“Sweet affliction, sweet affliction,
For it brings my Saviour near!”

O! my friend, he hath visited my heart again and again with his dear soul-softening presence.

One Sabbath morning, after I wrote to our dear friend —, I felt happy—“completely blessed,” never to my knowledge having experienced such a frame before. I seemed afraid to turn myself in bed, lest I should lose the sweet impressions and sensations which this blessed visit of Jesus brought upon my spirit. Indeed, I felt afterwards, and feel now, as if I could not communicate what I enjoyed. But the next day, when reading his blessed word, the most horrid thoughts were injected into my mind against the Lord himself, too base and impure even to hint at—surely fiery darts from Satan himself. Again, too, in the course of the week was I assaulted when similarly occupied, but in a different manner, which made me sigh and weep. The latter also was after a sweet manifestation of the Lord’s love, so that it appeared as if the enemy of souls knew that the dear Lord had favoured me, and was determined to harass, perplex, and fill my very soul with dismay; yea, dash my very hope, if he could. But Jesus came again; his presence cheered my soul. Those lines impressed my mind as referring to Jesus:

“Jewels to thee are gaudy toys,
And gold but sordid dust”

When He giveth quietness, who can make trouble? O that I could live beneath his smiles! O that I could enjoy more of his sweet, melting love! Sometimes the very thought of his mercy bestowed upon me brings the tears into my eyes in a moment. “O! why *me?* why should *I* be the subject of such mercy?” Surely he “will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy.” These words at one time appeared against me; but now I see that were it not so there could be no hope for me. He sees nothing in us to move him to regard us. O no; it is according to his everlasting purpose and grace before the world began. There is no hope for us, but in and through Jesus. He is the Way, the only way to the Father; and he

himself says, "The Father himself loveth you." O, my dear friend, what love, what mercy to such vile sinners! If I look into myself, I see and feel the same dreadful evils still lurking there. Yea, I have thought that sin at times has been more restless than ever. I am sure I have felt it so, when I would not have had an unholy thought cross my breast.

One day I thought of the man possessed with devils; for all my attempts were indeed feeble to keep down the guilty passions rising within. The manifestations of mercy make sin more sensibly and acutely felt. Do you not think so? When we would not have a sinful thought, to be encompassed, as it were, with a legion—this is trying and afflictive indeed. If I look into the world, nothing but darkness, affliction, and sorrow appear in view. If I begin to ponder over the scene (if spared to get out of doors again) that is ready to open before me, and to sorrow and mourn at the prospect—this sensibly brings the cloud upon my tabernacle.

O, dear friend, is it not with such things as these, and many more, that the blessed Jesus weans us from all but himself, and with an encouraging word tells us to look unto him? "My grace," he says, "is sufficient for thee." Why, then, should we burden our hearts with afflictions, sorrows, and trials which may never take place, if our lives be spared; or dread those occurrences which we may never live to see take place? But O! what poor mortals, what God-dishonouring and unbelieving creatures are we! O for the Shunamite's faith and confidence, who, under the most afflictive and bereaving dispensation, could still say, "It is well!"

My dear friend, I have felt quite disposed to destroy and not send what I have written, feeling very, very dissatisfied with all I have said; but I trust that charity, which "beareth all things," will bear with me in this my feeble attempt.

My health still holds better; indeed, I appear a miracle, though I am very nervous. My mind has not been very comfortable either yesterday or to-day. I feel low, and rather depressed in spirit at this time; and nothing that I have said, or can say, seems worth sending to you.

Yours affectionately,

Oakham, January 13, 1838.

T. C.

As seed virtually contains in it all that afterwards proceeds from it, the blade, stalk, ear, and full corn in the ear, so the first principle of grace implanted in the heart seminally contains all the grace which afterwards appears, and all the fruits, effects, acts, and exercises of it.—*Gill*.

God's children are liable to sufferings, whether we consider them as men or as Christians; as men: "Man that is born of a woman is full of trouble." (Job xiv. 1.) As our relations and comforts increase, so do the occasions of trouble. God never appointed this world to be the place of man's rest, but of our exercise, and only a passage to another world; and in this our passage we must look for storms and tempests.—*Bunyan*.

A LETTER BY THE LATE NATHANIEL MARRINER.

My very dear Friend,—I hope my old friend — is well, and that the good hand of our covenant God is known, felt, and enjoyed in his soul, to the joy and rejoicing of his heart. I often wish to have a few moments with him, that we may speak a little of the goodness of our God towards us.

I am often brought to wonder at and admire the leading and instructing hand of the Lord towards my soul, and his bearing with my manners in this wilderness. It is said that they shall "walk up and down in the name of the Lord;" and sure I am it is a truth, for my soul can truly say, "None teacheth like Him." Blessed be his dear name, he has led me many times to seek and sue for mercy, under a feeling sense of my absolute need, in mercy's own way; and I have been answered to the joy and rejoicing of my heart many times when I never expected it, and he has given my soul to feel I have his fear in my heart, and a comfortable hope and steady persuasion that my soul is eternally interested in that everlasting covenant, which is ordered in all things and sure. What, my dear friend, is all the profession in the world without the special teaching of God the Holy Ghost and the anointing of this Holy One? I would not be without this teaching for a thousand worlds. As for the conversion that passes current now-a-days, it would not do for me one hour; and I can but bless the Lord that he has kept my soul alive through all my path to seek and call upon his name, and has given me a true dissatisfaction with every other name but his, and to feel and bless the Lord from my inmost soul that the kingdom of God does not stand in word, but in power, and in much assurance of faith.

Ah! my dear friend, the dear Lord has endeared himself much to my unworthy soul. How often he melts me down in contrition and godly sorrow, under a feeling sense of his undeserved goodness to the basest of rebels—to see and feel what wisdom, what goodness, what almighty power are displayed in the glorious salvation of a sinner; but, above all, to feel at the same time a precious hope and a lively assurance of my union to the covenant Head, and that God has accepted my soul in the Beloved! This has constrained me to cry out, "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth my iniquity, transgression, and sin?" "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name!" O! that I could see old G—, and tell him what great things the Lord has done for my soul. "They shall rejoice in this portion, saith the Lord;" and my soul can truly say I do, for "the Lord is my portion," saith my soul, and I would not change my lot with any man living.

Give my love to Mr. W—, and accept the same yourself, for you are manifested in my soul and conscience, both of you, that the Lord's hand is with you, and that for good; and whatever they may say of his doctrine, sure I am they must tread in some measure in

his steps, and have his testimony, if ever they are saved. May the good Lord keep you united in heart and soul; and notwithstanding our daily infirmities, may the good Spirit of all truth and grace testify in our souls that we are accepted in the Beloved!

I have sent you Huntington, which I bought for you in London. Love to Mrs. — and all the family; and Mr. —, and all friends. I hope you will write to me soon, and when it is well with you remember me.

In the place where I am living are two meetings; the minister and people are full of blindness, ignorance, arrogance, presumption, and awful rebellion against the Sovereignty of God. I have been once or twice to hear them, and my soul both times came home as hard and barren as a stone; and the Lord has fully brought my soul to a point, that this proceeding is dishonouring to his ever-blessed name, so that I dare not go near them again. I therefore thought it prudent to have a meeting in own family, to spend a few minutes in prayer, read a chapter, and sing a hymn; this I do every evening at seven o'clock, and twice or three times on a Sunday. And really in these simple means it may truly be said as of Samuel, "The Lord is with him;" and of Jacob, "He blessed him there." You know there are only my wife and family. The ministers publicly tell the people to have nothing to do with me, for I am a dangerous fellow, and that my sentiments are a scandal to the country; but the approbation of God in my soul is more than a counterbalance to all such rubbish.

I have had another daughter born to me, the 17th of September, 1827. I have named her Naomi. The Lord bless you!

Bere Regis, Dorset, Oct., 1827.

NATHANIEL MARRINER.

A LETTER BY THE LATE WILLIAM HUNTINGTON.

My dear brother will say, "If all our dross and tin are to be taken away, how comes it to pass that so much still remain? When I would do good, evil is always present with me. No furnace that I have yet been in has ever removed the inbeing of it from me." No; if the vessels of mercy were ever thus effectually and perfectly purged, there could be no more conscience of indwelling sin. But the root that bears gall and wormwood still remaining, the furnace remains.

I can find that the furnace purges me from my evil frames, but not from the inbeing of sin, which betrays me into these evil frames. Self is daily to be denied; the war between the law of the mind and that of the members remains, and is sure to be, more or less, directly or indirectly, the daily cross that a child of God has to take up. On account of these things the spirit of judgment remains in Zion. To subdue sin, and to keep grace on the throne, is the cause of this fire and this furnace in Jerusalem.

Self-examination is to the believer the business of every day; and every bill that conscience files against us is intended to bring

us to the bar; and, upon trial, that which is disallowed, disapproved, bewailed, lamented over, and which is a cause of grief, and which makes us groan for deliverance, is no more we. It is not I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. We are complete in him, without fault before the throne, and clean every whit, notwithstanding these things.

W. HUNTINGTON, S. S.

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

Were saints their own carvers, they would soon cut their own fingers.—*Dyer*.

The Lord's wise love feeds us with hunger, and makes us fat with wants and desertions.—*Rutherford*.

God, who enables sinners to thirst after grace, will surely give them the grace they thirst after.—*Arrowsmith*.

All the prayings, teachings, and actings of men are, out of Christ, idolatry and sin in the sight of God.—*Luther*.

Gospel holiness includes a heart broken for sin, a heart broken off from sin, and a perpetual conflict with sin.—*Medley*.

Such is the omnipotency of our God, that he can and doth make to his elect, sour sweet, and misery felicity.—*Philpot the Martyr*.

God's people have tender hearts; wicked men have hearts of stone; when God smites them they are not grieved.—*Bunyan*.

Though they would not suffer me to preach the gospel of free grace quietly, yet God suffers me to die in the comfort of it.—*Cole*.

God had one Son without sin, but none without sorrow. He had one Son without corruption, but no sons without correction.—*Dyer*.

I know no sweeter way to heaven than through free grace and hard trials together; and where grace is, hard trials are seldom wanting.—*Anon*.

When a man cannot come down, and stoop to that condition which God casts him into, then he is discontented; and this comes from his pride.—*Bunyan*.

Woe is me! that the holy profession of Christ is made a stage garment by many, to bring home a vain fame, and Christ is made to serve men's ends, which is, as it were, to stop an oven with the king's robes.—*Rutherford*.

Christ is doing a work in us on earth while he himself is in heaven. He is humbling us, purging us, teaching us, mortifying our corruptions, crucifying our inordinate affections, sanctifying us, and so preparing us for heaven; he is making us meet for the kingdom; he is fitting us for his Father's house, by all his ordinances, and by all his providences, by every loss and cross, and by all our afflictions.—*Bunyan*.

The *gift* of prayer may have praise from men, but it is the *grace* of prayer that has power with God.—*Dyer*.

Be not ashamed because of your guiltiness. Necessity should not blush to beg. You are in the utmost want of Christ, therefore knock and cry.—*Rutherford*.

If a minister be erroneous, how should the flock be found? There is no readier way to destroy a whole town than by poisoning the cistern at which they draw their water.—*Gurnall*.

Some have written to me that I am possibly too joyful in the cross which God hath laid upon me,* but my joy overleapeth the cross, and terminates on Christ himself.—*Rutherford*.

In its best estate, free-will was but a weather-cock, which turned at the breath of a serpent's tongue. It made a bankrupt of our father Adam; it pulled down the house, and sold the land, and sent all the children to beg their bread.—*Rutherford*.

Great grace and small gifts are better than great gifts and no grace. It does not say, "The Lord gives gifts and glory," but, "The Lord gives grace and glory." Blessed is such a one to whom the Lord gives grace, for that is a certain forerunner of glory.—*Bunyan*.

Ten lives of black sorrow, ten deaths, ten hells of pain, ten furnaces of brimstone, and all exquisite torments whatever, were all too little for Christ, if our suffering could be a hire to buy him; and therefore faint not in your sufferings and hazard for him.—*Rutherford*.

Our hearts hang loose from God, and cleave to the creature, and when the creature fails our hearts are troubled; but faith takes off the heart from the creature, and settles it upon God in Christ, where it finds rest; and this is the great service it doth us.—*Bunyan*.

Generally speaking, those that have the most grace and the greatest gifts, and are of the greatest usefulness, are the most humble, and think the most meanly of themselves; so those boughs and branches of trees that are most richly laden with fruit, bend downwards and hang lowest.—*Gill*.

God's people may lose the sense of his love, but never lose his love, for that is everlasting. But to lose the sense of his love is a grievous trouble to a gracious soul, that hath tasted and felt the love of God and his favour; for his great happiness is to have the favour of God.—*Bunyan*.

Many earthly parents do not correct their children in measure, being ignorant of their nature and disposition, and therefore their correction doth them no good. Many physicians mistake the constitutions of their patients, and therefore may do them more hurt than good; but God knows our need and our strength, and so suits all his remedies accordingly.—*Bunyan*.

* He was in prison.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”—Matt. v. 6.

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”—2 Tim. i. 9.

“The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.”—Rom. xi. 7.

“If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”—Acts vii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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THE RENT VAIL OF THE TEMPLE; OR, ACCESS TO
THE HOLY OF HOLIES BY THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BY RALPH ERSKINE.

(Concluded from page 333.)

6. If the vail be effectually rent, then your heart will be effectually rent also; when the vail is rent the heart is rent; and there is something it is rent *for*, and something it is rent *from*.

First. Something it is rent *for*. It is rent for sin. Indeed, the sight of the rent vail, or of God reconciled by the blood of Jesus, will rend the heart for sin more than all the thunders of Sinai or the flames of hell: “They shall look on Him whom they have pierced, and mourn.” When a man reads his sins as they are written upon the cross of Christ, with the red ink of his sin-pardoning blood, O! then he reads them over with tears of joy, and his heart is kindly rent for sin. Then he cries, “Behold, I am vile!” When the vail is rent, the heart is rent not only for his own sins, but for the sins of others. “Rivers of tears run down mine eyes, because of the wicked that break thy law. I beheld transgressors, and was grieved.” They that can see God dishonoured, and hear men curse and swear, and blaspheme the holy name of God, and yet never be troubled about it, surely the vail remains upon their heart, otherwise their hearts would rend for the sins of others and of their generation. “Set a mark upon the foreheads of them that sigh and cry for all the abominations that are done in the midst of the land.” Again: when the vail is rent the heart is rent for the Lord’s anger and absence; nothing terrifies them

more than the Lord's anger. "O! rebuke me not in thy wrath, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure!" Nothing affects them more than the Lord's absence; for these things they weep: "Mine eyes run down with waters, because the Comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me." O! the little lamentation after an absent God, an angry God, in this day! Again: when the veil is rent, the heart is rent for the calamities of the church. "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughters of my people." The miseries of the church, and the sins that bring them on, are heart-rending to the people of God; and particularly are their hearts rent for the rents of the church:] "For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart."

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But that I may not digress too far, I am telling you that, if the veil be effectually rent within you, then there are some things your heart is rent for, namely, for your own sins, the sins of others, the sins of the land, the sins of the church, the calamities of the church, the rents of the church. The Lord's anger with her, and absence from her, may indeed make you weep when you remember Zion, and hang your harps upon the willow while we are gone so far into captivity, and the glory is so far departed. In a word, if the veil be rent with you, your heart will be rent continually for all these things, as also for all your heart-plagues. Your heart will be so rent for your atheism, ignorance, enmity, carnality, hypocrisy, roving, wanderings, worldliness, and such like, that you will be ready to say as Rebecca said to Isaac in another case, "I am weary of my life, because of the daughters of Heth."

Secondly. If the veil be effectually rent, then, as there are some things your heart will be rent *for*, so there are some things your heart will be rent *from*. Why, your hearts will be rent *from* sin as well as rent *for* sin. Your heart will say with Ephraim, "What have I to do any more with idols?" What have I to do any more with lusts? All that expect to get into the holy of holies in the heavenly temple are students of holiness and purity: "He that hath this hope purifieth himself even as He is pure." Christ having rent the veil, entered into the holiest with blood; and believers enter in all sprinkled over with that blood also. Believers want not sin, though it cleaves to them here; but they are so far from cleaving to it, that it is the desire of their soul to be rent from it, and therefore their daily sins oblige them to make daily application to the blood of sprinkling. Again: if the veil be effectually rent, then your heart will be rent from the world. O! this globe of earth and all the glory of it looks but like a filthy mote, a piece of dung, to the man who hath got his heart within the veil. The glory of God in Christ darkens all created glory. What cares he for worldly profits who hath Christ for his gain? What cares he for worldly honour who hath Christ for his crown of glory? What cares he for the world's all who hath Christ for his All in All? His heart

is rent from the world. Again: when the veil is rent, the man's heart is rent from the law. He that is married to Christ is divorced from the law. (Rom. vii. 4.) The law, as a covenant of works, the believer hath nothing to do with. "He does not owe it a cup of cold water," as one says; for Christ hath perfectly fulfilled the condition of the covenant of works, and therefore if the law challenge him, he sends it to Christ for a complete satisfaction. He desires, with Paul, to be found in Christ; and would not be found in his own righteousness for ten thousand worlds. He sees so much unholiness in his own holiness, so much unrighteousness in his own righteousness, so much carnality in all his spirituality, so much earthliness in all his heavenliness, so much sin in all his duties, that he is sure God may damn him for his best duties as well as his worst sins, and therefore he hath no expectation from the law, but is rent from it, and joined to the Lord Jesus, saying, "In the Lord only have I righteousness and strength." In a word, when the veil is effectually rent, the man is rent from self. It is very hard indeed to rend a man from himself. Self insinuates itself into all our praying, preaching, and communicating. However, the power of self is broken in all true believers. Instead of self-estimation, he is brought to this: "Behold, I am vile!" He has never a good word to speak of himself, not a good thought to think of himself; but every time he prays, every time he communicates, he cries out, "Behold, I am vile!" Instead of self-justification, he is brought to this: "I will lay my hand upon my mouth. I will not answer; I cannot justify myself, but must condemn myself, and justify the Lord." Instead of self-will, he is brought to this: "O! what shall I do to be saved?" And instead of self-fulness and sufficiency, he is brought to this: "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." He sees himself empty of all good, and filled with all evil. Instead of self-confidence and hope, he is brought to this: "We have the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raised the dead." All the elect are brought to despair in themselves. And instead of self-righteousness, they are brought to this: "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Thus, in so far as they share of the saving benefit of the rent veil, so far are they rent from self; and thus by these things you may examine yourselves as to what interest you have in this rending of the veil betwixt God and you.

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Use fourth, *for consolation to believers*, to whom the veil is so effectually rent in twain, that from the marks given they conclude they have made some entrance within the veil, by coming to God in Christ, and casting their anchor within the veil. I have a word of comfort to say to you, though perhaps you are still complaining of many veils that separate betwixt God and you. Yet a little while, and you shall have a triumphant entrance ministered unto you, into the holy of holies above, "whither the Forerunner hath for you entered." "Behold! the veil of the temple was rent in twain,

from the top to the bottom." Therefore you "shall come unto Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon your heads; you shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away;" and then all veils shall be rent and removed for ever. I will tell you, for your comfort, of a few veils that shall be rent then; for the rending of the veil of the temple promises the rending of all veils in a short while.

1. Then the veil of *sin and corruption* shall be rent in twain; all the rents, all the strokes that sin gets by the word, the rod, the Spirit, never rend a body of death from you; but still you are groaning under a sense of indwelling sin, that separates betwixt God and you. But then, O then, believer, this veil shall be rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and from the bottom to the top; both root and branch shall be rent and removed. For "when he shall appear you shall be like him;" your conformity to him shall be complete: you must go to heaven dragging a body of death after you; but when you come to the port of glory, there will be a joyful parting, for you will take an everlasting farewell of all lusts and corruptions. Then you will say "Farewell!" with all your heart, and "Glory to God that we shall never meet again! Blessed be God! we shall never see your face again."

2. Then shall the veil of *darkness and distance* be rent in twain; for then darkness will give way to light, glorious light; and distance will give way to presence, glorious and everlasting presence. "Now," say you, "I cannot see him, he is far away." But says Christ, "Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." To be "with me where I am," there is distance removed; to "behold my glory," there is darkness removed. Darkness and distance now create doubts and fears; but doubts and fears will then take wings and flee away, never to return again, for "the face of the covering shall be entirely removed." (Isa. xxv. 7, 8.)

3. Then shall the veil of *ordinances* be rent in twain; any view we have of God's glory now is mediate, through the intervention of means and ordinances; any glimpse we get of his beauty is through the dim glass of the word of truth. For "now we see through a glass darkly," says the apostle; but the time comes when the glass shall be broken, and "we shall see him as he is," in an immediate manner: "I saw no temple there, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." (Rev. xxi. 22.) And then shall the saints be able to say, the half of his glory hath not been told, when they shall see him face to face, and not his back parts, or the skirt of his garments only.

4. The veil of *scanty enjoyments* will be rent in twain; the veil of passing blinks and interrupted views. The life of the saint here is mostly a life of desire; he can never get his desire fully satisfied; and when you get any desirable meeting with the Lord, why, it is but a blink and away; your desires are but increased thereby, and your melancholy wants remain unsupplied. But within the veil all desires shall be satisfied, all wants shall be supplied, for

"in his presence there is fulness of joy, and at his right hand rivers of pleasure for evermore." No clouds, no night, no desertion there; no such complaint as this: "O! why hidest thou thy face?" The best communion and enjoyment here admit of interruption; but that which is above is uninterrupted: no tempting devil, no deceitful heart, no dismal cloud to darken their day, or interrupt their vision and fruition of God. Christ is here only passing by us, and as a wayfaring man that tarries only for a night, yea, hardly for a night. No sooner does he enter but he is away; no sooner does the heart begin to open to him sometimes, than, alas! he is gone. "I opened to my Beloved; but my Beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake; I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer." (Song v. 6.) But then their enjoyment shall be full, and everlasting, and uninterrupted, for "so shall they ever be with the Lord." Partial enjoyments will give way to eternally full enjoyments: "For when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away."

5. The vail of *church disorders and confusion* shall be rent in twain. Many times you have reason to sigh and complain that matters are all out of order in the church; the vail of confusion and disorder is upon it, and the glory departed; nothing but clouds in our sky. It is with the church as it is with particular believers; the Lord usually brings them to an extremity before he gives them a deliverance. The darkest night may usher in the clearest day. "To them that fear his name the Sun of righteousness shall arise." Whatever dark eclipses the sun may be under at present, do not say the sun is gone out of the firmament, because it is a cloudy day; the clouds may grow thicker and thicker yet; yea, there may not only be dark clouds, but rain, and perhaps a terrible shower of wrath is coming; many things look like it. But though there should be both clouds and rain, say not the sun is gone, and will never return and shine again; he that rent the vail will rend the clouds in his own time. Yea, the rending of the vail of the temple did foretel good to the church. It says that he will rear up a more glorious temple, such as is promised: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests and not comforted! behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundation with sapphires; and I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones." (Isa. liv. 11, 12.) Why, what is the meaning of all this? "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." (Verse 13.) You see it is a time of unusual darkness in the church, so it is indeed; but here is a promise of light that shall arise: "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." Is it a time of great division and contention? It is; but here is a promise of great peace: "Great shall be the peace of thy children." We hope there will be a more full accomplishment of this in the church, even in time; but when will all this come to pass? Why, we may come to be tried with another kind of tempest before it come to

pass: for, see how the promise is ushered in: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests and not comforted!" Then follows the promise of a pleasant issue. But withal never expect a perfect church upon earth; we hope it will be *nearer* perfect, but it never will be *perfect* till "that which is in part shall be done away." The time is coming when the bride, the Lamb's wife, shall be presented to him without spot or wrinkle; when the union of the saints shall be entire, and the communion of saints shall be perfect. There will be no contention, no division, no disorder in the general assembly and church of the First-Born, that are written in heaven.

6. The veil of *militant graces* will be rent in twain, and nothing but triumphant graces will have the throne. "Now remaineth faith, hope, charity; but the greatest of these is charity." Why, love is a triumphant grace, and faith and hope will resign to love the chair of state. There will be no need of militant graces in the church triumphant: no need of faith where vision is; no need of hope where fruition is; no need of patience where all tribulation is at an end; no need of any fighting grace where there is nothing but victory, light, life, love, joy, glory. You have a fighting life of it here, but then a song of victory—victory for evermore.

7. The veil of *infirmities* will be rent in twain. Here believers have infirmities in their bodies, that have no small influence on the acting of their souls; infirmities in their souls, darkness and dulness in their intellectual powers; even the new nature, though created in Christ Jesus, though supported by his power and guided by his grace, yet still is a weak thing, like a new-born babe. None of these infirmities are in them that are within the veil; they are become perfect. "Till we all come in unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." (Eph. iv. 13.) Then that scripture shall be fully accomplished: "The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound." (Isa. xxx. 26.)

8. The veil of *mortality* shall be rent in twain; for "this mortal shall put on immortality, this corruption shall put on incorruption, and death shall be swallowed up in victory." The veil of flesh, the clay tabernacle, will be rent in twain: "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." (2. Cor. v. 1, 2.) O! were you ever brought to that man's saying, "O mortality, mortality! O time, time! that will not haste away to let eternity come!" Were you never content to shake the sand-glass of time to win eternity? Were you never content to take death in your arms, and say, "Welcome, welcome, O friend! welcome news, that mortality shall be swallowed up of life!"

9. The veil of *incapacity* will be rent in twain. Now you are

not capable of that glory which you shall be able to behold and contain in heaven; your eye is so weak that you cannot behold the Sun of Righteousness shining in his strength. Though light be the most pleasing thing to the eye, yet the meridian brightness of the sun cannot be looked upon without destroying the sight, because the faculty is not so strong, nor capable to receive the object. So it is here; we want a capacity to behold the light of glory. But within the vail, or in heaven, the faculty will be strengthened, and the capacity enlarged, to hold an exceeding great and eternal weight of glory; the want of which hath made some in time, when their cup hath overflowed with consolation, to cry out, "Lord, hold thy hand, thy servant is a clay-vessel and can hold no more." Indeed, it is little we get here below, and it is little we can hold, though we should get our fill; but in heaven the capacity will be so enlarged, that it will be able to hold a fulness of God, a fulness of glory, a fulness of joy at God's right hand for ever and ever.

10. The vail of *weariness* will be rent in twain. Here we soon weary of praying and preaching, we soon weary of sermons and sacraments. I doubt not but many here may be wearied to the heart with this day's work. Indeed, little wonder that the carnal heart says, "What a weariness is this work!" "For," as one says, "you may take a carnal man, tie him to a post, and then kill him with praying and preaching only." But even the spiritual man himself, while he hath a wearying body of death about him, he wearies of ordinances, he wearies of God's service; but in heaven, within the vail, they shall serve him without wearying or fainting. There "his servants shall serve him." (Rev. xxii. 3.) Their weary service here is hardly to be called a service; but there his servants shall serve him indeed. O! will it not be a mystery, and a great wonder, if we, who cannot pray half an hour to an end, but are toiled as if we had done some marvellous work, shall be brought to heaven, and never weary of the service of heaven? Here is comfort, believer; you shall through all the years of eternity praise him and never weary.

11. In a word, *all the tails of trouble and trials* will be rent in twain. "There remaineth a rest for the people of God." The vail of sorrow and anxiety shall be rent in twain; for "all tears shall be wiped from their eyes; sorrow and sighing shall flee away." The vail of sickness and uneasiness of body or soul will be rent in twain: "The inhabitants of that land shall not say, I am sick. The people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." The vail of wandering thoughts and vain imaginations will be rent in twain. You will not have a wrong thought and conception of God throughout all eternity; for all your heart-plagues, lusts, and corruptions, that you have been wrestling with all your days will leave you, and I am sure you will leave them with such pleasure and satisfaction, and be so glad to part with them, that you will hardly shake hands with them, but rather say, "The back of my hand to you; many a sad hour, many a sigh and groan have you cost me; but it is well for me that now I am quit of you for ever." And I cannot but say,

that they who now have a glad heart to think of a parting with these, and a meeting with Christ for ever, they have got some communion with him this day.

12. Finally, the veil of *time* will be rent in twain, and the streams of time will be swallowed up in the ocean of eternity. O! how will you say with wonder then, "O! hath such a black and ugly creature as I was got glorious Christ in my arms, never, never, never to part again!" O! how will his kind looks dart a sweetness and joy inexpressible into your hearts, when you shall be led with the Lamb about the rivers of living water, when time shall be no more! Take all this comfort into your hearts, believers, for the God of consolation allows you to rejoice for ever, and to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, which you shall see and be for ever possessed of within the veil.

SATAN'S POLICY DETECTED, AND HIS CRAFT EXPOSED.—BY JOHN RUSK.

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices."—2 Cor. ii. 11.

(Concluded from page 324.)

8. A further attempt is, *raising up another set of preachers*, who preach the law as a rule of life, not out of love to God, or holiness, but to bring God's family into bondage. They tell us we are to do all the good we can, only we are not to depend on it. Now this appears very plausible; and as we are naturally for doing something, this just suits us. "But," say you, "are we not to do all the good we can?" Yes; but can you call that "good" that keeps me from Christ? for without him I can do nothing. Now, though the law of itself is holy, just, and good, and is intended to condemn me to death, stop my mouth, make me know I am a sinner, and make sin appear exceedingly sinful, bring me into bondage, and show to me that I am all over a mass of corruption; yet after I am brought savingly to Christ, and have faith in, and bear love to him, peace, pardon, and reconciliation, and enjoy that blessed liberty in my soul,—*then* for any one to try to get me off from that of God's working in me, to set me to work at the commandments in my own strength, is a trick of the devil, as you may see in the Galatians, which Paul calls "bewitching" them.

But we must receive seven things, which are essential to salvation, none of which come from the moral law; and you will do well to take particular notice of them as I go on.

1. *You must be pardoned*, for nothing shall enter the heavenly Jerusalem that defileth. But this does not come from the law; no; so far from the law pardoning us, it brings us in guilty for one offence. The law says, "He that offends in one point is guilty of all;" then you cannot call that pardon which aggravates matters to the highest pitch. Again: "The law entered

that the offence might abound," "that sin by the commandment might become exceedingly sinful." This is far enough from pardon.

2. *You must be a believer in Christ Jesus*, for "he that believeth shall be saved," and none else; but then the law is not of faith.

3. *You must have on the righteousness of Christ*, for "the unrighteous shall not enter the kingdom of God;" but then "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified."

4. You, as an heir of promise, *must have the promise of eternal life come home to your heart*, for "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Now we, as Isaac was, are heirs of promise: But then, says Paul, "If they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect."

5. *You must receive the Holy Spirit*, for "without holiness no man shall see the Lord;" but says Paul, "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the preaching of faith?"

6. *You must have Christ formed in your heart the Hope of Glory*, or else, says Paul, "ye are reprobates." Now, God has promised to "give Christ for a covenant to the people;" this is not of the law, for that is called an old covenant; but this a new covenant, established on better promises, and it is said not to be according to the old covenant. The covenant is Christ, for you may trace every new covenant-blessing to him; as for instance, It is called "a covenant of life and peace:" John says, "This life is in the Son;" and Paul says, "He is our peace." It is called a covenant of grace: but this we receive, says John, out of his fulness. It is a perpetual covenant, which shows its duration: and Solomon says, "In his right hand are length of days;" "He is thy life," says Moses, "and the length of thy days." We read of the bond of the covenant, which Paul calls charity; but then the love of God is in Christ Jesus. We are called children of the covenant, but he is the everlasting Father. It is called a covenant of mercy, but the "sure mercies of David" are given him. The Spirit also is called a covenant, but Paul says, "If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." Thus I might go on, for it is plain He is the Covenant.

7. Lastly. *You must be married to Christ Jesus*, for "they that were ready went in with him to the marriage chamber, and the door was shut"—shut against all others. But does this marriage union come from the law? No; Paul says we must be "dead to the law that we may be married to Christ;" but if this first husband be not dead, and I claim a union with Christ, I am not married to him, but am an adulteress. Such were the foolish virgins. Now, to bring us back to the law again is an attempt of Satan, as before observed.

9. Another attempt is, when Satan says, "*You have a bright experience; very few can tell it out so clearly as you can; and what knowledge you have in the Scriptures!*" He will then turn our mind to some that we shall see who appear cheerful, and sit under the same minister that we hear. "There," says he, "that man knows

nothing of the deep waters, trials, and temptations that you do; he is a hypocrite in Zion; I would write to him and tell him where he is deficient; he is in a smooth path, and at ease in Zion." And what does he aim at by suggesting these things? Aim at? why, to sow discord amongst the brethren, that we may slight them and set them at nought. And this is pride in us; we are lifted up. Satan fell here himself, and he labours to lift us up, as he knows "a haughty spirit goes before a fall." You may feel him blow, and yourself swell like a bladder. Paul exhorts to the contrary and says, "Be not high-minded, but fear;" and for a man "not to think of himself more highly than he ought." Paul felt this after he had been caught up to the third heaven.

10. Another attempt is, *to lay snares for us*, and that in various ways. Sometimes a new tune will take the ear, and an object that sings it the eye: and this will work for hours, yea, for days. If the preacher has been fervent in prayer, and the believer's heart has gone with the preacher's mouth, "A new tune," says Satan, "will suit me at the back of this;" so that the believer shall be charmed with the tune instead of the power; and the same after a sermon. Again. "So and so is a nice young woman, and no doubt," says he, "but she fears God. Now, if you could but get to talk with her husband about spiritual things, it would introduce you into her company. You know," quoth he, "that 'they that feared the Lord spake often one to another.'" Now, this is a trick of the devil as sure as you are born; for they are inordinate affections, and if this bait were to take, it might cause you to go halting to your grave. Again. After having been so highly favoured as to claim God as our covenant God and Father, God is pleased to withdraw. "Now," says Satan, "presume and speak against the Spirit of God, and see if election will keep you;" and thus he tempted our Lord to cast himself down, which would be to presume. Now, these are snares. But David says, "Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler."

11. The last attempt that I shall mention is, *to drive us to black despair*, telling us we are out of the reach of God's mercy; perverting Scripture to distress us; stirring up enmity against the saints, the ministers of Christ, and against God; setting one part of God's word to contradict another; getting us to watch for people's haltings; stirring up a corruption to oppose every grace, and mimicking grace in every hypocrite; these and many more are his attempts, and are called the depths of Satan. I have only hinted at them, but to those who read this, it will be a hint for further enlargement on the subject.

V. I come now to the fifth head of this discourse, namely, *Which is the best way to overcome Satan?* The way, and the only way, is through Jesus Christ. I might mention six ways, but He is the whole of the six.

1. To resist Satan *we must be pardoned*; hence you read they overcame Satan. But how? Why, through Christ the only way. "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." I believe the word is life: "My word is life," says Jesus. It is afterwards called commandments. (Rev. xii. 17.) It was a commandment to Christ, and Christ calls it life everlasting. We know it by loving God. He circumcises our hearts to love him that we may live. This the law of God commands: "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another;" and, "We know that we are passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." So that, take the word, and it is life; and take the commandments, and they are life. But what is "their testimony?" I answer, the Holy Ghost: "for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy;" and you may take them both together. "After three days the Spirit of life entered into them." Thus by pardon, life, and the Spirit of God, Satan is overcome.

2. By *faith*. "Ah!" say you, "faith—that is a trifling thing." It may be in your eyes, but not in the eyes of one who is made sensible of his unbelief. Pray, is the power of God a trifling thing? "No," say you. Well, faith stands in that. Is salvation trifling? "No," say you. Well, "he that believeth shall be saved." Is God's glory trifling? "No," say you. Well, remember, to be strong in faith, is to give glory to God, and to gain victory over the devil, which is what we have in hand to speak of. Is that trifling? No. Then, says Peter, "Resist him, steadfast in the faith." Never call faith trifling, or a trifling thing, seeing it stands in God's power, is connected with salvation, gives God the glory, and overcomes the devil: "Whom resist, steadfast in the faith." But Christ is the Author and Finisher of real faith.

3. We must overcome Satan by *the righteousness of Christ which is imputed to us*, and this you may see in Joshua the high-priest. Satan stood at his right hand to resist him; but when he was clothed with change of raiment, then "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan! is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

4. By *pleading the promises in faith*, one of which is, "I will give you power to tread on serpents, and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you;" and "whatsoever ye ask believing, ye shall receive."

5. We overcome Satan by *a joint interest in Christ Jesus*, and sharing the benefits of his death on the cross; for on the cross he "spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly;" and "through death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

6. By *a part in the first resurrection*, which is known in time by being raised to newness of life. On such the second death hath no power. In all these things we overcome Satan and get the advantage of him, for Paul says, the saints shall "judge (fallen) angels." This will be a complete victory.

I have told you a little, and but a little, of our greatest enemy,

the devil. We will now make a few remarks, and so conclude. From what has been said, we find Satan is unwearied in his attempts; he never sweats or tires. He can work in us to sleep, and work in us when asleep; he can rob the mind, raise up hypocrites to counterfeit the experience of the saints, and present himself to God in them; he can draw our hearts after forbidden objects, bring texts of Scripture to distress you, and raise up some preachers to preach the letter of the gospel, and others to preach the law as the rule of life; he can lift us up and make us high-minded, lay snares for our feet, and tempt us to black despair. Then what may we learn from all these things? Why,

1. That *none but God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, can overcome him*; and though the believer is said to do it, yet it is not by any power of his own, but by putting on the whole armour of God, that, in his promised strength, he may be able to withstand the wiles of the devil. If you ask what this armour is that is mentioned in the sixth chapter of Ephesians? It is the Lord Jesus Christ, and nothing else. Now, let us take every part of it. (Eph. vi. 14., &c.)

1. "Having your loins girt about with truth;" and Christ says, "I am the truth." "And so," say you, "are the Scriptures." Yes, and Christ says they testify of him; and so says God, and Christ is God, for so says the Father: "But unto the Son, he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Now, truth is applied to Christ as God-man: "I am the truth;" and to him as God: "A God of truth, and without iniquity; just and right is he."

2. "The breast-plate of righteousness;" "And this is the name whereby he shall be called, Jehovah our righteousness."

3. "Having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Paul says, "He is our peace."

4. "The shield of faith;" and Christ told Abraham he was his "shield, and his exceeding great reward."

5. "The helmet of salvation;" and he is "God's salvation to the ends of the earth."

6. "The sword of the Spirit," which is the word of God. Christ tells you his "word is life;" and Paul says, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

7. "All prayer;" but "ask it in my name and I will do it." Thus He is the whole armour. Then, says Paul, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and walk in him." Seeing this is the case, may we pray earnestly in all our petitions that this living union may be kept up: "Abide in me, for without me ye can do nothing."

2. We learn to seek Christ in all the means of his appointment.

1. In the public ordinances: "I sought him in the broad ways."
2. Amongst lively Christians quickened by the Spirit. Do not seek the living among the dead.

3. By prayer: "I sought the Lord, and he heard me." Daniel

did the same: "I set my face to seek the Lord by prayer and supplication."

But what shall we gain by this seeking? Why, God's promised help, for "when the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." This standard is the Root of Jesse, "which shall be for an ensign to the people, to it shall the Gentiles seek." Then, do not expect to get it without seeking: "Seek and ye shall find;" "What God has joined together, let no man put asunder."

Do not dream of such a victory in this world as to leave off fighting, for this will never be the case. Paul brings the fight and the end of the race together: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course."

Every victory we get over the devil will be by prayer. Do we overcome by the blood of the Lamb? David got this pardon by prayer, and so must we: "I called on the Lord, and he forgave the iniquity of my sin;" "and for this (pardon) shall every one that is godly call upon him." Again: by faith we get the victory. Then, this is our prayer: "Lord, increase our faith." Again: By the Spirit "lifting up a standard;" and he has promised to give his Spirit to them that ask him: "Ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened to you."

Finally. The victory is obtained before we are engaged in battle. Say you, "How?" Why, in this text: "He that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I overcame, and have (this is already done) sat down with my Father on his throne." The Lord make us good soldiers of Jesus Christ, that we may "war a good warfare, lest Satan get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices." Amen and amen.

A LETTER FROM THE LATE NATHANIEL MARRINER.

My dear Friend,—I dare say you have been expecting to hear from me before now, respecting Mr. — coming down to —. He is perfectly agreeable, but the church, like himself, being very poor at present, circumstances will not admit. He would not have the least objection to Mr. — speaking in his chapel at any time, but at present he will not be able to come. This, my dear friend, will terminate for the best, but more of this when I see you. "The prudent shall keep silence in that time." (Amos v. 13.)

Now, my dear friend, for a few words touching our never-dying souls, and a little of the goodness, kindness, condescension, and everlasting faithfulness of our covenant God in Christ Jesus our Lord; for when God the Holy Ghost calls a court in our souls, by gathering all our thoughts, desires, mind, and will together, he prompts us to look back and ponder over the way by which the Lord hath brought us. "It is the wisdom of the wise to understand his way." says Solomon. We are then enabled to dwell upon the wonderful, condescending, discriminating, and

special goodness of our God, in first bringing us to an anxious concern and employing our thoughts upon eternal matters by quickening our dead souls to feel our lost, ruined, and undone state; in making us feel day by day, yea, from one hour to another, the awful depravity and corruptions of our hearts; in bringing us to feel the absolute necessity of a perfect, free, and full salvation, or we must eternally and justly perish; and in putting a cry in our souls which brought us down to his blessed feet, crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and "Lord, save, or I perish." Again: in making us willing to read and search the word of God, and to attend the means wherein the Lord is pleased to grant the grace of faith, for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Again: in enlightening the understanding a little into the ever-precious, suitable, and glorious plan of salvation. This faith credits, and is secretly and sweetly persuaded in a small degree of the soul's eternal interest in it. Here the grace of hope, which maketh not ashamed, will show itself; this will bring us frequently and willingly to the Redeemer's feet; and sure I am the soul is not altogether destitute of joy at such a time. Again: by planting his fear in our souls, which makes the conscience tender, so that we begin to have a sacred awe of God and a filial fear of offending him, and thus we need not ask any man what is right and what is wrong; for we have a faithful monitor within that will give a true decision. What dear Hart says of this fear is a great truth,

"An unctuous light to all that's right,
A bar to all that's wrong."

It is for want of this fear that there is so much awful craft and hypocritical dealing among ministers and people; it is for want of this that so many rotten Arminians push themselves into the ministry to nurse their idleness, and in order to maintain their damnable pride. It matters not to them whom they receive into their churches, ten, twenty, or thirty at a time; some Arminians, some Socinians, Deists, and Arians, yea, the devil himself, for sure I am he worketh in the children of disobedience, whether they are in a profession or not; and sure I am that both such ministers and people are diabolical to every good word and work. There are many popular ministers in London, under the immediate influence of their master the devil, who will belch out their blasphemy against our ever dear and precious Jesus; and thousands preach against the ever-blessed Person of the Holy Ghost, and his sweet efficient operations altogether. Many, too, of our polite, smooth-tongued, whole-hearted gentlemen are as bad, for they deny the power. If a poor soul tell them any thing of what God has done for him, insist upon the sweet Spirit's teaching, and that the kingdom standeth not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God, they will in a moment deny it, and utterly reject it. You have plenty of these easy ones at —; but when the Holy Ghost stops them, "they will proceed no further" in this line of things. (2 Tim. iii. 9.) I know the lip of truth says, "Let these go their way." I wish I could, but it really hurts my

soul to see how they trample upon the Only Way, and attempt to rob him of his glory. I am fully persuaded, were the Lord pleased to give them a few days of what my soul has passed through, they would drop like the snuff of a candle. But when we come to look on our right-hand and left, and see the many thousands going this way of eternal death in perfect ease and security, I can but bless, admire, and adore his ever-precious name, to feel he has given my soul an earnest desire after him, brought me to cry, and hunger, and thirst for him, a sweet pleading with him, a hope in his dear name that I would not part with for ten millions of worlds, and a sweet persuasion in my soul that I have an interest in his everlasting and covenant love. This encourages my soul to call upon him. Blessed, yea, for ever blessed be his all-precious name! he condescends to give me such a sweet persuasion of my eternal union with him, that really it kills me to every other object under heaven, and I have been permitted of late to call him mine, so as often to say, "Lord, I cannot do without thee," and he makes my soul feel he will not do without me. He is to see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied; and should my worthless soul be one of that happy number, I know I shall form a part of that satisfaction. I know he is every thing my soul can desire, and when I have got him sensibly and feelingly in my soul, the Hope of Glory, I am fully satisfied with such a blessing and favour. "O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord." (Deut. xxxiii. 23.) At such times as these, what a sweet gratitude, what blessings, what praises, what meltings of soul, what sweet contrition, what sweet communion, what sweet admiring of this Chiefest among ten thousands, until there is not a faculty but what is fully employed in giving this Altogether Lovely his own fruits!

My dear Friend, it is my soul's desire to live more to his glory day by day. I would be dead to every other way and object, dead to every other object of hope, dead to every other object of life, dead to every other object of prayer, praise, or worship, yea, dead to self, my own base heart, my own stinking righteousness, and would live in more sweet communion with him, lie more low and close to his blessed feet, feel more gratitude for every mercy I receive from him, whether spiritual or temporal, and live daily under a sense of his undeserved goodness to my worthless soul. But where am I running, when I know that my old friend knows more about these things than I? but, blessed be his dear name! what he has done for my soul I would ever wish to praise him for: "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me;" nor could my soul give him up for ten thousand worlds. This my soul often tells him, though so very often cast down through my base heart, when I have no sweet longings after him, no earnest cry to Him, no sweet pleadings with him at a throne of grace, nor a spark of thankfulness for his great goodness, shut up at a throne of grace, and with a heart stuffed full of enmity, lust, and rebellion. But let me tell my dear friend that, though I cannot get rid of these evils at such a time as this, I am surprised oftentimes to find at the bottom

of all a little hope, nor do I dare even at such a time say I have neither part nor lot in the matter; yet sure I am nothing less than the Almighty Spirit could support and keep hope alive in such a flood of difficulties. This is hoping against hope, and when he condescends to give my fickle soul a small glimpse of his sweet, satisfying, and lovely face, I am happy—all is well. But when he is gone, there is nothing can fill his place; a straw will be enough to stir up our nasty tempers, yea, it is hell upon earth.

My dear friend, I now conclude; may we be kept low at his feet, waiting and watching his hand, and have a thankful heart to love him. May he keep his fear alive in us, and our consciences tender. This is no small mercy, my old friend. Be sure you give my love to Mr. W., and all the friends that love our dear Lord; to Mrs. — and family. to —, and accept the same yourself from

Walworth, January, 1827.

NATHANIEL MARRINER.

THE HILL MIZAR.

Dear Sister,—I at length take up my pen to attempt to write a few lines to you; and need I apologise for the little correspondence we have with each other, seeing you stand equal with me in this respect? I draw the reason from my own feelings—a want of aptness for writing. But often have I reflected with shame and confusion of mind, that we should appear to be so far distant from each other, considering not only the ground of natural relationship in which we stand to each other, but more especially that high relationship, that everlasting, eternal bond of union, subsisting between Christ and his church, as Head and members, Vine and branches. And in many other such characters is he set forth in the letter of truth, in order that we may come into an apprehension and evident enjoyment of interest in him; all which emanates from the eternal counsel of Jehovah, Father, Word, and Holy Ghost, in the choice of a people in Christ Jesus, according to the good pleasure of his will, flowing from the very heart and bowels of his love.

And here you and I, as finite creatures, must stop to view with astonishment, wonder, adoration, and praise, its height, breadth, length, and depth; for it is declared, "God is love," though "who by searching can find out God" in his immensity? This he confirmed in his predestinating us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, to be conformed to his image, and to obtain eternal glory; in Christ's receiving them at the hands of the Father as a gift, to become responsible to fulfil his will and purpose in bringing them to his kingdom and glory, to which he hath predestinated them. And it shows itself more fully in his foreknowledge of the awful depth of degradation and ruin they would fall into by sin, and the awfulness of the wrath of God as a penalty due to transgression. Still he says, "Lo, I come, I delight to do thy will, O God."

And in the fulness of time he came forth as the Great Mystery of Godliness.

God was manifest in the flesh as Mediator, to execute the vast designs of love and mercy, by which he lived obedient, according to the righteous demands of the holiness of Jehovah, unto death, even the death of the cross. And being thus spotless, pure, undefiled, and separate from sinners, he offered himself through the eternal Spirit a sacrifice to God, as an atonement for all the sins of his people, by which they obtain eternal redemption and a righteousness which justifies them fully from all sin; and by his righteous obedience they obtain an eternal inheritance, that is, a title to eternal glory. In his thus dying unto sin once, death hath no more dominion over him; thus he destroyed death, and him that hath the power of death, spoiling principalities and powers; and in his resurrection and ascension to his Father's right hand he made a show of them openly, "leading captivity captive, and receiving gifts for men, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God the eternal Spirit might dwell among them," quickening, revealing, making known in their hearts and consciences, the reality and preciousness of so great a salvation, which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

Dear sister, this to my soul includes the whole sum and substance of the gospel of the grace of God. You may say within your mind, "These things are all very true; but unless I have a sensible feeling and enjoyment of them in my soul, they are but as a dry statement of truth." Well, it may be so; but you will find, when you are weary and faint by the way, and ready to perish for want, that there is nothing so sweet as this good old wine of the kingdom, when it maketh the heart glad; for it will make you sing of the goodness of the Lord, and he will rejoice over you with singing. This wine is for them who are of a heavy heart. There will be a few nuts to crack and eat with it, no doubt; and let us bear in mind, my dear sister, when the Lord is about to feed us with meat, and not with milk, from which hitherto we may have received all our consolations and comfort, he weans us from it, and then we begin to fret, and murmur, and pine. But with his tender and gentle hand he draws us from the breast, and sets one precious truth before us now, and another anon. "No," says the child, "I cannot eat it, I will not have it. I want the comfort and consolation wherewith my mother comforted me when I was first born. Instead of this, I am as one cast into a waste, howling wilderness, and am desolate, and made to sit upon the ground, and mourn like a dove. I am ready to perish with hunger; my soul fainteth within me; I am ready to die." As it is written, "Then they cry unto the Lord, and he heareth them, and delivereth them out of all their troubles," and says, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth;" and the poor soul says, I flee unto thee to hide me; and thus being one who hath escaped of the house of Israel, they find him to be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a

covert from storm and from rain. And he saith, "Come with me, my love, my dove, come away;" and "he brought me into his banquetting house, and his banner over me was love," and he saith, "Eat, O friends: yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." And what is so suitable to a soul in such a case? I learn this in all the controversies he hath with my soul, sharp, bitter, and keen as they may be to my feelings. He leadeth me about this vast wilderness to teach me what is in my heart, and the value of that salvation which I personally have in him in its fulness and freeness, by tokens of love, grace, and mercy, by the witnessing of the Spirit with a sealing testimony of his word, which is the sealing of the Spirit unto the day of redemption, by which we have a sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection.

I trust, dear sister, that you know some of the sweets of these things; and if we begin to reckon, we say first our pathway is that of tribulation. What with sin, guilt, and misery within, the world, the flesh, and the devil without, we feel as much rebellion as a wild bull in a net, so entangled and shut in, till all strength is gone, and none left. Thus he makes us to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord; at which sight the soul feels too broken down to move, and is as quiet as a lamb; so we reckon again, with the Holy Ghost, that tribulation worketh patience. And in the continual exercise of these things we experience the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, which produceth a hope of which we shall never be ashamed: so that we may reckon with the apostle, that the "sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."

Now, dear sister, if you and I were to sit down to review the little history of our spiritual life; and if the Holy Ghost, the Remembrancer, should bring us to remember him from the land of the Hermonites (destruction), where he said, Look from the top of Shenir and Hermon, we should call to mind when life and light were given us to feel our ruin and misery, under which our souls were made to cry, to look, to long, to sigh, and breathe out desires for salvation and deliverance. And hence we remember Tabor, where we felt contrition. And he gave repentance towards God; and then the Hill Mizar, (Psalm xlii.) faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; then a little dawning of hope, and so a little reviving in our bondage. And how many times have we been brought to remember him thence, to prove to us our life-union to him! and how many mercies and love-tokens have we received at his hands to prove to us his grace-union! And if you and I can read notes together here, it proves we have one faith, the gift of God, produced by one Spirit, to be looking and coming to one Object, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Centre and Source whence emanates all spiritual life, and to which all must flow; hence we prove our union to our Lord, and to each other in the Lord. But the Lord, to confirm us more and more in these sacred mysteries, brings us not only to sit upon the ground, but to cry out of the dust, if so be there may be hope, and out of the deep,

as out of the belly of hell, and like Jonah, to look once more toward his holy temple. And out of these things I have had the richest blessings that ever I experienced, for therein he shows he is determined to save me, and that he has a greater revenue of interest in me than I have in him, which makes covenant bonds so firm and the word of God so precious; especially when he says, "I will betroth thee unto me for ever, in righteousness, in judgment, in loving-kindness and in mercies; I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord." Then says the soul, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." But I must forbear. You may depend upon it, he will make you and me glad in glory to crown him Lord of all to all eternity.

I pray you may have as much sweetness in reading these few hints as I have had in penning them, then it will not be in vain; and amidst all, read the word of God, with your eyes up unto him.

From your unworthy but affectionate brother in Christ Jesus,
Nov. 7th, 1846. G. L.

HOW PRECIOUS ARE THY THOUGHTS UNTO ME, O GOD!

My well-beloved in Christ,—Allow a worthless sinner to salute once more his brother in the flesh. Grace, mercy, and peace, the gift of the Father's love, from and through the Son, by the power of the Holy Ghost really felt within, be with thee!

Herein is contained the sum and substance of the religion of Jesus, the religion that my soul has espoused and loves; nor can I live unless I enjoy somewhat of it within my troubled, anxious breast. Let these three words be written on my forehead, even as they are engraved on my heart, and may the sweet effects thereof be seen in my life while here below, even as my soul pants with great desire to feel and enjoy them still more and more within, that the worldling may see and be confounded, and Zion be glad in the Lord.

England is full of religion; but what does nineteen-twentieths of it amount to? It begins in the flesh, and it will end in the flesh, if sovereign grace prevent not. How often does my soul groan to see poor deluded mortals, whose words and actions bespeak them dead in trespasses and sins, as full of this religion as they can hold! May I not say of them, they are "righteous overmuch?" Nevertheless, how often has God angered me by them, and provoked my soul to jealousy by this foolish nation—angered me, not because I was not one of them; but seeing their diligence in their delusions, it has made me feel angry with myself, and with sin for binding me down so fast to flesh and sense, that I felt I could not rise from my low estate, and love, and serve, and obey, and glorify my dear precious Lord Jesus as my soul could wish, nor be favoured with worshipping him in the assemblies of

his saints as I desire. And jealous over my desperate, deceitful, wicked heart, lest it should start aside, and allure me into a treacherous calm again, and hinder me of the few comforts I do now oftentimes enjoy, and "thereby I should have sorrow upon sorrow."

It is written, "Be ye angry, and sin not." This is coming near to it. But, O my soul, who can do so to the full extent? Notwithstanding, it surely cannot be sin to be angry at sin, for it is the new man within alone that is angry at sin; for the flesh loves sin, and will go after it, unless restrained by divine power; and that holy life within, the apostle says, "sinneth not." In this sense I understand the apostle in another place, where he says, "It is then no more I that do it, (viz., the new man of grace within, which cannot sin,) but sin (the old Adam nature) that dwelleth in me." Blessed be God for revealing this mystery feelingly to me; for before it was thus made known, my soul was held between hope and fear, in proportion as my feelings and comforts ebbed and flowed. But now my soul gladly relates to you, that now I feel my mind much more settled, and the fears of death and hell do not disturb me. Still my days and hours pass away amidst the deep-felt groans and sorrows of my heart, because I cannot cease from sin, and because my sin causeth my dear Lord to hide his face from me, and shut me up in prison beneath his chastening hand. This causes my whole life to be well nigh one of suffering and sorrow.

O! how sweet a rest heaven will be to me! Surely if many felt as weary of sin, and self, and the world as I, they could not be so grasping after earth's ten thousand fooleries, and let their soul's best interests go. I feel it to be to my interest when I am kept near to a bleeding Saviour; then I am right, and all things in providence and in grace go well with me. But alas, alas! how often does unbelief thrust me from his dear feet! Then I am troubled, and my sins, and sorrows, and cares, and fears, and woes abound. Then my fretful soul thinks all is going on wrong and everything is out of order; and sometimes, in the rebellion of my peevish heart, I wish I could lay myself down and die. O! what a mercy it is that the dear Lord remembereth that we are but dust, and wills thus to bear with us so long! Bless his dear, holy name, he knows the cause, which as soon as he is pleased to remove these painful effects straightway cease. He darts forth another look from his excellent glory upon me, and says, in all the compassion of his loving heart, "Doest thou well to be angry?" Then a little softening, a little melting, a little relenting, begin to steal gently and sweetly over my heart, till all my soul is melted with joy and grief; my eyes are bathed in tears of comfort, and shame, and sorrow, and joy; and all my powers tremble with vehement desire for grace, and powers, and abilities to sound forth his worthy praise according to the desires I feel, that heaven and earth may hear.

My dear brother, my very heart weeps now for joy while I record it, and wonders with great amazement "to feel its own hardness depart." O! what a mystery of mysteries the religion of Jesus is! and what a mystery am I! How it melts my eyes and heart

with thanks and gladness to God for revealing it to me! Had he designed to have withheld the blessed vision for ever from me, I must have lived and died ignorant of it; nor could men, or angels even, have influenced him, to alter his mind and show me mercy.

How precious these thoughts are to me, O Lord, thou knowest. Ah! how different I do feel now from what I did when the fear that God had not elected me did work such wrath and rebellion in my heart, that I felt I could not live, and yet was afraid to die. I do remember it still, and shall as long as time shall last with me. I do not wonder at that blessed doctrine being so hated as it is, for my soul then hated it; but now it is dear beyond description to my heart; atoning blood, felt in my conscience again and again, has made it so.

But thy thoughts, dearest Lord, were not always precious to me. During far the greater part of my unregeneracy, I did not think or care anything about them. While under the terrors of the law they were most terrible to me, because I felt assured that thy thoughts were thoughts of wrath and eternal banishment from thee towards me. But when thou didst tell me, on that ever memorable night, never to be forgotten, while amidst the silent shades I rolled in soul-agony, "not to fear; that thou wast my God; that thou wast with me, and wouldst strengthen me, and help me, and uphold me by the Right Hand of thy Righteousness," which is Christ, my Saviour, Friend, and Lord—I then, for the first time, felt persuaded, with joy unspeakable, that thy thoughts were not thoughts of wrath and eternal banishment from thee, but of love, to give unto worthless, sinful me an expected end. And what is that? To feel and sing thy great and marvellous loving-kindness through life and in death, and to be with thee, thou dear Christ of God, for ever; to behold thy glory, and sing thy praise, and sin no more. This is the end I expect; and by thy manifold and repeated acts of love and mercy since then felt and enjoyed in my heart, I am now come to a comfortable hope, yea, a joyful certainty, that thou hast thus thought of me in love, and dost still, and ever will thus think of me in love. And thou knowest that my soul cannot but think of thee, for thou art so kind and precious to me, and without thee I cannot do anything, nor can I live without thy presence, help, and blessing. Let the effects prove it, and thy Spirit in my heart witness for me and thee.

Then no wonder, say you, that your song is, "How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God!" No marvel, my brother; but what is the sum total of God's thoughts towards me below, and the blessedness he thinks of conferring on me beyond the grave, I know not at present to the full—I know only in part. Through much tribulation I have come thus far, and tribulation still awaits me while here; for it is through much tribulation I must enter the kingdom—there is no other way. So God has thought, so has he willed; and as he has willed, so it shall come to pass. This he has willed for his own glory and our real good, for the deeper our sorrows

here, the more loudly we shall sing when we are once safe there; and his chastenings, rebukes, scourges, &c., are all contained in that word, "much tribulation," which the Lord knoweth I am not unacquainted with, though I have often had the honey of the word mingled with the bitters, and felt Gilead's balm applied with healing power to the stripes, which has soothed the sorrows of my mind, and made me patient and resigned beneath his hand. Part of heaven I have also enjoyed on this side Jordan's flood, as an earnest of the inheritance, and am living now in hope that after death the God of love will reveal the rest; then shall I be perfectly satisfied when I awake up in his likeness, and not before. Precious Jesus! how precious are thy thoughts unto me! And how much more precious would they be if thou wouldst but grant me the whole of the desires of my heart!

God's thoughts are not as man's thoughts. The ancient settlements of the eternal Three-in-One; the unfoldings of everlasting love in his choice and promises, in the birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and all-prevalent intercession of the dear Lord Jesus, in the calling and gathering in of his redeemed, in all his providences and dealings with them, in all the manifestations of his good will and pleasure on their behalf, and in, and by, and through them, in saving them fully and freely, in confounding the wisdom of the mighty by the foolish things, and the base things, and the despised things which he has chosen, and bringing all his beloved ones safe to glory at last, and leaving all the rest to fill up their measure of sin and iniquity here, and to perish in their sins for ever, and thus showing himself a just God and a Saviour,—all, all shall prove it true, that God's thoughts are not as man's thoughts, neither are his ways as man's ways; they are established in the very heavens, and his praise shall endure for ever.

"This God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death." Praise ye the Lord! The election has obtained and will obtain his mercy, and the rest are and will be blinded. I have obtained his mercy; this proves that God thought on me before in love. Electing love is the first link of the great chain of salvation; redeeming, sovereign, saving mercy, is the middle link; and eternal glory is the last link thereof. This golden chain is girt round my heart, and is on the neck of every man whom the King delighteth to honour. How precious are these thoughts to me! He who has given me grace will give me glory too, as sure as I have felt the earnest thereof within.

The dear Lord has brought my heart down with hard labour, to accept with gladness his own salvation, in his own appointed way; and now he makes me labour hard, in sharp soul-travail and much anguish of spirit, in watchings, and prayings, and weariness and faintings oft, night and day, during my wakeful hours, in sighs and groans unheard by mortals, and in tears of sorrow, hope, and joy, for every favour he bestows on me. Thus they come with a double sweetness when they do come, with sweet encouragement still to pray, and to hope still in his mercy, endearing his

precious name, and will, and ways so much the more to me, and proving again and again that my confidence in him is not a vain confidence, and that I shall not hope in him in vain, nor "serve God for nought."

O, my dear friend, how blessed is such a confidence locked up in the breast! Humility and brokenness are its constant companions. This is true confidence indeed. But how hard it is to get at and to maintain it within! Nought but divine power can enable us to do either; the closer our communion with God is, the stronger will be our confidence in his mercy. The more we know of his secrets, the more precious will his thoughts be to us, and the more we see of his glories and enjoy his presence, the more we shall love him, and hate ourselves in the world, and long to be with him above. Is it not so, my brother?

Our united love to you and your spouse, in Christ Jesus. Let us know if it is well with thee and thine. I feel rather poorly in body, but rejoicing in a precious Christ. While recording it, my heart melts away at his dear sacred feet, my frame trembles for joy untold at his lovely name. O! how I long to praise him above, free from sin and all the effects thereof! but the ties of natural affection seem to draw me back. Blessed be God for thinking of me in love, and for choosing me and saving me in, and by, and through a precious Christ. My soul is overcome. Adieu!

Yours affectionately in the Lord,

Bedworth, February 11th, 1848.

G. T. C.

THE LORD GOD, MERCIFUL AND GRACIOUS, LONG-SUFFERING, AND ABUNDANT IN GOODNESS AND TRUTH.

Dear Friend and Brother,—This comes in covenant love to you and all the Israel of God, hoping it will find you well both in soul and body. I do not expect that this will find you perfect in the flesh, nor yet free from the cross, which is the badge and honour of all the saints. To carry a cross for Christ is the greatest honour the dear Lord Jesus can confer upon us in this vain and crooked world; but at the same time our poor, weak nature will kick and rebel under it. But the dear Lord is so good, kind, and merciful as to bear with much long-suffering mercy towards us. O! my dear friend, if he were not so, I am sure he would have cut me off long ago, and sent me to hell a thousand times. Oh! I do long to love him, to fear him, and to glorify him in all things. But instead of this, I seem to feel at times as if I had no love to him at all, and as if I had no fear of God in my heart. I feel so hard and so shut up; no pouring of my heart out before him. Instead of honouring and glorifying him, I seem to myself as if I did nothing but dishonour him in all I do, think, or say. I mourn, I groan, I sigh, and I cry out, "Why go I mourning all the day through the oppression of the enemy?" and yet, in the midst of

all this, I do feel that there is something in me that will call the dear Lord *my* Lord and my God. I do feel such a riddle to myself, that I often think there cannot be any body else like me. A few days ago, the dear Lord favoured me with a very blessed time in prayer. O! what I felt, and what I saw with the eyes of my understanding, I cannot express with my tongue or pen. I cried, I blessed and praised the dear Saviour for what he had done for me and all the Israel of God, and felt such a love flow out of my heart to the Lord, his people, and his ways. O! I was just in my element; yet ever since that time, (which did not last long,) I have been filled with everything but that which is good, which makes me cry out with Paul, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

O! the goodness of a covenant-keeping God, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever! My love to all the friends; and may the dear Lord in his infinite mercy be with thee, and keep thee, and grant thee every blessing that is needful, both spiritual and temporal.

Yours in the bonds of covenant love,

April 20th, 1848.

W. B.

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

Nature is so corrupted as not to understand its own depravation.—*Owen*.

I have questioned whether I ever knew anything of Christianity, save the letters which make up the word.—*Rutherford*.

Creature comforts are often to the soul what suckers are to a tree; and God takes off those that this may thrive.—*Ryland*.

When you see the refiner cast his gold into the furnace, do you think he is angry with the gold, and means to cast it away? No; he sits as a refiner. He stands warily over the fire and over the gold, and looks to it that not one grain be lost. And when the dross is severed, he will out with it presently; it shall be no longer there.—*Crisp*.

God's own servants, Christ's own disciples, may have their hearts filled with sorrow; against this our Lord commands many preservatives. But the ground of this sorrow is often from ourselves, from our own hearts, though Satan will have a hand in it; and it comes not from humility, but from pride. Because we cannot have our wills, therefore we are discontented.—*Bunyan*.

Election having once pitched upon a man, it will find him out, and call him home, wherever he be. It called Zaccheus out of accursed Jericho; Abraham out of the idolatrous Ur of the Chaldees; Nicodemus and Paul out of the college of the Pharisees, Christ's sworn enemies; Dionysius and Damaris out of superstitious Athens. In whatsoever dunghills God's jewels are hid, election will both find them out and fetch them out.—*Arrow-smith*.

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