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A table of contents for *The Gospel Standard* can be found here:

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THE
GOSPEL STANDARD,

OR
FEEBLE CHRISTIAN'S SUPPORT.

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INDEX TO THE SIGNATURES.

- A. B. T., 201.
 Agnes Beaumont, 136, 172, 181.
 An Eye-witness, 104.
 An Inquirer, 410.
 Anonymous, 166, 259, 285, 322,
 351, 389.
 A Smoking Flax, 261.
 A. W., 377.
 B. & M. G. Gregory, 71.
 Beaumont, Agnes, 136, 172, 181.
 Beeman, Isaac, 302.
 Berridge, John, 16, 304.
 Boorne, James, 36.
 Brook, W. J., 69, 202, 379.
 Bunyan, John, 12, 36, 204.
 Cennick, J., 37, 100.
 C. M. C., 50.
 Cole, 36, 72.
 Copeland, Thomas, 271, 341.
 Delta, 73, 217, 331, 397.
 Dr. McCrie, 109, 145.
 Dredge, R., 21.
 Editors, 1, 207, 246, 359.
 Erskine, Ralph, 8, 35, 36, 52, 60,
 79, 144, 160, 216, 245, 324.
 Eye-witness, An, 104.
 Fowler, Henry, 33, 155, 180, 216,
 232, 269.
 Gadsby, William, 30, 36, 68, 196,
 284.
 Gregory, B. & M. E., 71.
 G. T. C., 125, 273.
 Halyburton, 120.
 Harley, William, 289, 336, 381,
 403.
 Henry Fowler, 33, 155, 180, 216,
 232, 269.
 H. H., 266.
 Huntington, William, 17, 168, 228,
 344, 369.
 J. C., 424.
 I. D., 283.
 I. K., 57, 237, 309.
 Isaac Beeman, 302.
 James Boorne, 36.
 James Lewis, 34, 306.
 James P—, 177.
 J. B., 140, 195, 317.
 J. H., 53.
 J. M., 89.
 John Berridge, 16, 304.
 ——— Bunyan, 12, 36, 204.
 ——— Kent, 144, 343.
 ——— Keyt, 319.
 ——— Knox, 84.
 ——— M'Kenzie, 88, 203.
 ——— Rusk, 45, 93, 130, 149, 189,
 223, 253, 312, 345, 361.
 ——— Symons, 31.
 J. W., 278, 373.
 Kent, John, 144, 343, 409.
 Keyt, John, 319, 411.
 Knox, John, 84.
 Leighton, 103.
 Lewis, James, 34, 306.
 Luther, 90.
 McCrie, Dr., 109, 145.
 M'Kenzie, John, 88, 203.
 O., 115, 161, 197, 233, 296, 325.
 Owen, 36, 108, 200, 344, 402.
 R., 54
 R. I., 407.
 Ralph Erskine, 8, 35, 36, 52, 60,
 79, 144, 160, 216, 245, 324.
 Rusk, John, 45, 93, 130, 149, 189,
 223, 253, 312, 345, 361.
 Rutherford, 36, 88, 108, 135, 324,
 360.
 S. D., 157.
 Symons, John, 31.
 T. C., 276.
 T. G., 29, 142, 263, 305, 387.
 Townshend, William, 71.
 W. B., 241.
 W. C., 159.
 Warburton, Sen., 419.
 William Gadsby, 30, 36, 68, 196,
 284.
 ——— Harley, 209, 336, 381.
 ——— Huntington, 17, 168, 228,
 344, 369.
 ——— Townshend, 71.
 W. J., 19.
 W. J. Brook, 69, 202, 379.
 W. L., 27.
 W. S., 281.
 W. T., 24.

POETRY.
 Kent, John, 144.
 W. W., 108, 180.

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 a 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. 10.

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ADDRESS TO THE READERS OF THE
“GOSPEL STANDARD.”

God has ever been pleased to work by instruments. Had it been his holy will, every event might have been brought about by a succession of miracles, and human agency been wholly discarded. But from the beginning *instruments* have been employed in the execution of his eternal purposes. By Noah were the inhabitants of the old world warned of the coming deluge; by Moses and Aaron was Israel led up out of Egypt, and by Joshua brought into the Promised Land. By a succession of prophets were the children of Israel admonished, reprov'd, or instructed; by deliverer after deliverer were they brought out of repeated scenes of captivity and bondage.

In New Testament times *instruments* were still made use of to accomplish the designs of infinite mercy. The risen Jesus said to his disciples, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” And then, to show that he would raise up a succession of faithful ministers, he graciously added, “And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

But it may be further remarked, that it has always pleased God to make use of, in themselves, very *weak* and *inefficient* instruments. The rod of Moses, the rams' horns of the priests under Joshua, the earthen pitchers of Gideon's little band, the sling of David, the mantle of Elijah, the waters of Jordan in which Naaman washed, and the salt which was cast into the springs of Jericho, were all so many instances of this grand truth, that though God works by instruments, it is always by the *weakest*. And, indeed, were it otherwise, the glory of God—the great, the final end of all his works, would seem to be tarnished or suffer loss. Were he to work by any but the weakest instruments, the pride and infidelity of the human heart would arrogate to itself all the praise. To lay claim to this has ever drawn down the resentment of God. Sennacherib, (Isa. x. 13—18,) Nebuchadnezzar, and Herod (Acts xii. 22, 23) paid the penalty of robbing God of his glory. But to prevent the creature thus breaking in upon the divine prerogative, God has purposely employed the weakest instruments, that all human glory might be effectually cut off. This is beautifully set forth in the first chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, and especially verses 26 to 29, where the whole seems to be summed up: “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence.”

If any good be, then, now doing to the souls of men, we may be sure of two things: 1. That it is for the most part by instruments. 2. That these instruments will be weak and despised. And, whatever be the gloomy state of Zion, let us bear in mind that “all the promises of God in Christ are still yea, and in him, Amen, unto the glory of God by us.” “If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself.” Among these promises, uncanceled and unrevoked, is, the Lord's gracious presence with his people to the end of the world: “Because I live, ye shall live also;” “I will never leave you nor forsake you;” “I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you;” “Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Zion may be low in a low place; faithful ministers may be taken away; hypocrites and dead professors may abound; popery may be coming in like a flood; upon

earth there may be distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves of revolution and tumult roaring; the world, as well nigh worn out, may be rocking to her base, and tottering to her fall like a cottage; and, worst symptom of all, the people of God may be rent and torn asunder with division and strife, so that faith and love seem well nigh perished out of the land. But Jesus still lives. He still sits and rules upon his throne. He must still see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied. A seed shall still serve him; a people formed for himself, in whom he will be glorified. And he still holds the keys of hell and death; is still the Resurrection and the Life; and must, and will reign, till he hath put all things under his feet.

If he, then, lives as Zion's glorious Head, he still has living members; if he be still the great High Priest over the house of God, he has spiritual worshippers; if still a King, he has subjects; if still a Prophet, he has those that sit at his feet and hear his word. A Shepherd without sheep, a Husband without a bride, an Advocate without clients, a Headstone of the corner without "lively stones," a Saviour without objects to save, an Intercessor without any for whose cause to plead—this is not Jesus. No, whatever occur, there is still, and ever will be, a living people on earth who have union and communion with a living Head.

But these instruments, it may further be observed, are not only weak and feeble, they are also *fallen*; and, as such, partake of, and therefore frequently manifest, the sins and infirmities of our fallen nature. Noah "drank of the wine and was drunken;" Aaron fashioned the golden calf; Moses was guilty of impatience and unbelief, and rebelled against God's commandments; (Num. xx. 12; xxvii. 14;) Gideon set up an idolatrous worship; (Judges viii. 27;) Jonah fled from the presence of the Lord to Tarshish; Jeremiah cursed the day of his birth; and, not to mention others, Jephthah, Samson, David, all instruments of Israel's deliverance, flagrantly showed they were fallen creatures.

These three points may, then, be considered as established from the word of God: 1. that the Lord works by instruments; 2. that these instruments are, as regards themselves, weak and feeble; and 3. that, as fallen creatures, they often manifest the sins and infirmities of fallen nature.

But from these points flow three consequences: 1. that God chooses his own instruments; 2. that he makes his strength perfect in their weakness; 3. that all the sin and shame are theirs, and all the glory his.

But admitting the truth of these remarks, the question at once arises, how are they applicable to the "Gospel Standard," and how do they bear upon the Annual Address? In this way: If the Lord choose to employ the Standard as an instrument of good to his people, may he not do so? Is he not a sovereign? Can any step between him and his divine prerogative of selecting his own instruments to do his own work? Who dare say that God shall not use it as an instrument? And if he graciously condescend to use it, what matters it if one man say, "He cannot," another, "He will not," a third, "He must not?" That God has mercifully wrought good by it is unquestionable. One instance will suffice, which cannot but be considered a remarkable providence. Rusk sat writing year after year in his lowly garret, as if by a divine impulse that his works would one day be published; but what human probability was there of this coming to pass? He was very poor, and the only work he published had scarcely any sale. Is it not a singular circumstance, that, after his death, his persuasion should be verified; and that by the publication of his works in the "Standard," a much wider circulation should be given to his writings, and they brought before the family of God much more, than if he had published them himself? And if these writings have been blessed, can the hand of God be denied in it? and is not this a sufficient proof, were all other wanting, that the "Standard" has been employed as an instrument of good?

But what poor judges are individuals generally of any good that may be doing to the souls of men! A number of the "Standard" comes in; it is hastily cut open, and a piece hurriedly read. It does not suit the reader; it is at once, therefore, thrown down, and neglected, or unhesitatingly condemned. A judgment instinctively, as it were, springs up in the mind, and perhaps escapes the lips: "*This can do nobody any good.*" But who made thee a judge? It may be blessed to another; and if so, whose is the loss and whose the gain? A similar circumstance often occurs in the ministry of the word. A sermon is preached by a gracious man, but is not blessed to a certain individual. He perhaps hastily condemns both sermon and minister. Some months afterwards it comes out that that very sermon has been signally blessed to a poor, tried child of God. Until we know all men's hearts, trials, states, cases, and circumstances, and until we can determine what instruments God shall employ, and how, when, where, and to whom he shall employ them, hasty judgments are best suspended. Let this question be rather asked: "Is it truth? Is it agreeable to the word of God and the experience of the saints?" If so,

let this be rather my feeling: "If not blessed to me, it may be to others. God is a sovereign, and in his hands I leave it."

2. But if the second position be true, that the strength of Christ is made perfect in weakness, can the "Standard" be in itself anything but weak, if it be an instrument of good? Its weakness is its strength, as its strength would be its weakness. And if this weakness be felt and acknowledged, if creature strength be utterly renounced, if all dependence be placed in the Lord, if the object sought be the glory of God and the good of his people, why should not the blessing of God rest upon its pages?

Whether for good or evil, periodicals are almost universally sought after and read. Books of any size are too expensive for the poor, and too bulky for general reading. By means of the "Standard," letters by gracious men, extracts from authors, and a variety of profitable reading may come before the eyes of many to whom they may be made a blessing.

3. Admitting still further, that the Lord employs *fallen*, and therefore sinful instruments, as well as weak and feeble ones, can it be expected that many traces will not be discoverable of sin and infirmity in the pages of the "Standard?" Fallen creatures will ever manifest a fallen nature. But the grand point is, whether these infirmities are seen; and if seen, felt; and if felt, avoided. In these things a periodical, conducted in the fear of God, will resemble the course of a Christian. Rashness, hasty judgments, harsh speeches, strife and controversy, will sometimes characterize the infancy of a periodical as the infancy of a Christian. But as there is, or should be, growth in a Christian individual, so there is or should be growth in a Christian periodical. The kind advice of friends, and the harsh censure of enemies; a growing experience of the evil of strife; a clearer view of what is really experimental and profitable; a greater willingness to know and do the mind of Christ; a more matured view of men and things, both as regards the church and the world; a more mellowed state of soul, springing out of the dealings of God in afflictions and trials, as well as corresponding blessings; all these, it may be hoped, will be evidenced in the growth of a periodical as well as in that of a Christian. In conducting the "Standard," the grand object has been to insert only what is really profitable, and to exclude what is unprofitable.

Religious gossip, therefore, three fourths of which are generally false, old wives' tales about churches and ministers, personal attacks or allusions, flattery of friends and censure of enemies, strife and

controversy on unimportant points, dry doctrinal statements without power, dew, or savour, all such unprofitable matter will not, it is to be hoped, appear in the pages of the "Standard;" but only what is "honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report."

With every care and desire to the contrary, evil, indeed, and infirmity will occasionally appear; but let this be considered as incidental to fallen nature, and not deliberate, wilful transgression. Nay, this incidental, not wilful, infirmity may be graciously overruled to cut off creature-exaltation, and mar the pride of man. "Where is boasting? it is excluded." "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

But is there not another side of the case—another view of the question? God condescends to employ instruments—these are weak and sinful. But is that all? Does not grace still reign, still superabound? Is it not still an ever-flowing, overflowing fountain, unexhausted and inexhaustible?

Man dies, but Jesus lives; nature fails, but truth abides; sin abounds, but grace superabounds; instruments are weak, but Christ is strong. Should, then, the weakness and sinfulness of the instrument thrust it into despair? Should the work be laid down because creature-knees totter and creature-hands flag? If so, the gospel ploughman might leave his plough, and the spiritual fisher his net. Pressed down by a sense of creature-weakness, Jonah fled to Tarshish, and Mark from accompanying Paul and Barnabas. But the one got into the whale's belly, and the other caused a strife between two apostles. Paul learnt a different lesson from his thorn in the flesh. Creature-strength oozed out through the wound of the rankling thorn; but in weakness thus made known was Christ's strength made perfect.

This, then, is the true place of an instrument, preacher or writer, pulpit or periodical: to be weak, utterly weak; to be sinful, desperately sinful; and yet to have Christ's strength made perfect in weakness, and Christ's grace superabounding over sin.

And what will this lead to in experience as a practical result? To self-confidence and self-righteousness, to sloth or despair? No, but to the exact contrary. Throw the creature upon itself, it will be swollen with pride or agonized with desperation. Success will puff up, and disappointment hurl down. It will ever fluctuate between utter sloth or hurried activity; be swift to condemn others and slow to condemn itself; will seek its own profit and glory; mistake its own spirit; listen to no voice but that of flattery; move restlessly and

proudly round its own narrow circle; despise all the true followers of the Lamb; and close a life of hypocrisy by a death of despair. Such is the creature left and abandoned to its own ways, strength, wisdom, and righteousness. But take an instrument used in the Lord's honoured employ. He is all weakness, folly, blindness, ignorance, and sin. But by this experimental knowledge of sin he is made and kept humble, tender, teachable, dependent. Nay, more, his sense of sinfulness makes him strive after sanctification, of weakness after strength, of ignorance after wisdom. Sin brings him to Jesus' feet, and weakness keeps him there. Boast he dare not, for he is altogether vile; and work he cannot, for his strength is gone. Presume he must not, and despair he may not. Ever last, and ever last; seeing none so bad as himself, and therefore slow to condemn; admiring grace wherever seen, and loving the image of Christ wherever discerned; seeking the Lord's glory, not his own; ever working, and in his own eyes doing nothing; a willing servant of the Lord's people; faithful, but tender; spiritual, but not censorious; righteous, but not self-righteous; neither a Pharisee nor an Antinomian; using the world, but not abusing it; neither slothful nor hurried; living *to* the Lord, and dying *in* the Lord—such is a feeble picture of what an instrument in the hand of God should be.

If this be a true description of what an instrument of good to God's people ought to be, should not the aim of the "Standard," if it desire to be such an instrument, be to walk in the footsteps thus traced out? It may fail in the attempt; but such should be its aim and object. And if it has no such definite aim or distinct object, its claim to be an instrument is but a pretence. But be it remarked, to aim is one thing, to attain the mark is another. The archer aims at the bull's eye; if he aim not at the centre, will he strike the target? His aim, however, may be good, but his eye defective or his arm weak. Let the motive, end, aim, object of a preacher or writer, editor or correspondent be considered. Is that right? Is that the glory of God and the profit of his people? Then let defects, infirmities, short-comings, everything not absolutely inconsistent with its primary end and aim be tenderly passed by; and where the "Standard" has been made in any way a blessing, let the throne of grace be sought on its behalf, that only that may appear in its pages which shall be made instrumental in promoting the glory of God and the spiritual profit of his church and people.

THE LITTLE CITY BESIEGED AND DELIVERED; OR
THE DELIVERANCE OF THE CHURCH BY CHRIST,
AND THE INGRATITUDE OF MEN TO THE GLO-
RIOUS REDEEMER REPRESENTED.

BY RALPH ERSKINE.

“There was a little city, and few men within it: and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: now, there was found in it a poor wise man; and he, by his wisdom, delivered the city; yet no man remembered the same poor man.”—ECCLESIASTES ix. 14, 15.

It is questioned amongst interpreters whether this be a history, or a parable. I am not here to dispute the matter, but take it to be parabolical; and reckon the Spirit of God hath left the application for us to make, which I would essay to do, both in agreeableness, I hope, to the analogy of faith, and in a suitableness to the present occasion.

The verses contain news from heaven; and particularly,

1. Here is a *city described*: “There was a little city, and few men in it.”

2. The *city besieged*: “There came a great king against it, and besieged it; and built great bulwarks against it.”

3. The *city delivered*, and the *siege raised*: “Now, there was found in it a poor man; and he, by his wisdom, delivered the city.”

4. The *ingratitude* of the citizens: “Yet no man remembered the same poor man.”

1. Here is a *city described*, both from the *quality* of it, “a little city,” and from the *paucity* of its inhabitants, “few men within it.” Now, what are we to understand by the *city*? Why,

First. If by the city we understand the *world* in general, it might seem strange that the world should be called a little city; but he that walks with God, as Enoch, and as the prophet Isaiah expresseth it, “dwells on high,” sees this world to be nothing but a shadow; yea, before God “all the nations of the earth are as nothing.” And as it is little, so there are few men within it; because those we call *men* cannot, according to Scripture, be distinguished from beasts and vipers: “A generation of vipers;” and of these there are many. But very few men are to be found in the world; none but those that are transformed and turned from beasts to men. “The beasts of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls.” “This people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise.” (Isaiah xliii. 20, 21.)

Secondly. By the city we are to understand the *church of God* in particular. The *name* of the city is “*Jehovah shammah*,” “The Lord is there.” The *wall* of the city is “salvation,” which God hath appointed for walls and bulwarks; the *food* of the citizens is the Word of God, and the “bread that came down from heaven.” But in what respects the church is compared to a city so frequently in Scripture, we may afterwards consider. It is but “a little city,”

and "few men within it," in comparison of her enemies, and all the rest of the world, that are without the church.

2. Here is the city *besieged*. Where we may notice,

First. The greatness of the *besieger*: "There came a *great king* against it, and besieged it." Whether we take this great king for God, in one respect; or for the devil, in another respect, and for sin and death that attend him; these, in various respects, lay siege to the city.

Secondly. Notice the greatness of the *siege*: "He built great bulwarks against it." God, in his awful justice; the devil, in his desperate malice; sin, in its destructive subtilty; and death, in its dreadful terrors. A great king raising great bulwarks against a little city, and few men within it, they must be in a very dismal situation. But,

3. Here is the little city *delivered*, and the *siege raised*: "There was found in the city a poor wise man; and he, by his wisdom, *delivered* the city." Where notice also two things, namely, How the deliverer is described, and how the city was delivered by him.

First. How the deliverer is *described*: "There was found in the city a *poor wise man*." I think it is not only agreeable to the analogy of faith, but very probable to be the intent of the words, to give a description of Christ, the Deliverer and Saviour of his church; whom we may here view as described,

(1.) By his *humanity*, a *man*; for "he was a man of sorrows;" "The Word was made flesh."

(2.) By his *divinity*, a *wise man*; for he was, and is, the essential "Wisdom of God."

(3.) By his *humiliation*, a *poor man*; for, "though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor."

(4.) By his *destination* to this work; he "was *found* in the city." Who found him? God, who says, "I have found a ransom; I have found David my servant." Where was he found? Even "in the city, among men;" "I have laid help upon One that is mighty," says God, "even one chosen out of the people." (Psalm lxxxix. 19.)

Secondly. How and in what *manner* he delivered the city, even by his *wisdom*: "He by his wisdom delivered the city." By his Deity; for if he had not been the infinitely wise God, he could never have relieved the city; even He who, by his wisdom, "stretched out the heavens" when he made the world; by his wisdom fulfilled the law, and appeased the wrath of God; by his wisdom outwitted the old serpent, and "destroyed the works of the devil;" by his wisdom "finished transgression, and made an end of sin, and vanquished death;" and so by his wisdom delivered the city from justice, Satan, sin, hell, and death. In his wisdom he delivers the church, the city of God, by the virtue of his blood and by the power of his Spirit. Thus the city is delivered and the siege raised.

4. and lastly. Notice in the words the *ingratitude* of the citizens upbraided for their unkindness: "Yet *no man remembered* the same poor man." Where you have,

First. The *nature* of their fault, and the *aggravation* of their ingratitude; they were so far from requiting him kindly, saying, "What shall we render to the Lord for his benefits towards us?" that they did not *remember* him; they never so much as minded him. Their disease was that of sinful oblivion; they forgot him and his kindness: "They soon forgot his mighty works."

Secondly. The *universality* of this ingratitude: "No man remembered the same poor man;" none remembered, "no not one;" they are "altogether become ungrateful."

Thus you have the history opened, and a short hint at the mystery contained in it.

From the words thus opened, we may lay down this proposition:

Observation. That though the work of redemption, or the deliverance wrought by Christ for sinners, be a very great and memorable work, like the raising of a great siege against a little city; yet there is a proneness in man to forget the Redeemer or Deliverer, and all his work of kindness toward them.

We need go no further for the confirmation of this doctrine than the institution of the Lord's Supper, which you have been celebrating. "Do this in remembrance of me;" as if it had been said, "Ought you not to remember me, your Redeemer; me, your Deliverer, that hath raised the great siege that was laid against you; yet you are prone to forget me and all the kindness that I have done to you; therefore, I have instituted this ordinance to keep you in mind. 'Do this in remembrance of me.'" But I shall refer the farther confirmation to the prosecution of the doctrine in the following method, according to the former division:

I. I would speak somewhat concerning the *little city*, and the *few men* in it.

II. Concerning the *great siege* laid against it.

III. Of the *deliverance* thereof, and the reasons of the siege.

IV. Of the *ingratitude* of the citizens, and their proneness to forget their Deliverer.

V. Make *application* of the whole.

I. I am to speak of the *little city*: "There was a little city, and few men within it." There are four things remarkable concerning the church, which this part of the text presents to us.

Remark 1. That the church of God is comparable to a *city*, and often compared thereto in Scripture: "There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God." (Psalm xlv. 4.) The church, in allusion to a city, is a place of *security* and *defence*: "We have a strong city, salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks;" and it hath watchmen upon the walls. It is a place of *society*, where the saints have fellowship one with another, exhort and comfort one another. It is a place of *unity*; where they are to maintain "the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace." It is a place of *trade* and *traffic*; where we trade with heaven, and "buy gold tried in the fire," "white raiment," and "eyesalve," without money and without price. It is a place of *freedom* and *liberty*; where all the true citizens are

freed from the law; from the curse of the law, the wrath of God, and all subjection thereto; also from the guilt of sin and the rule of it. It is a place of *order* and *regularity*; where men are regularly entered burgesses, and are to come in by the gate of the city, even by Christ, who is the door. It is a place of *rest*, commodious to live in; and there is no resting-place for the soul but here. It is a place of *pleasure* and *joy*: "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth." There is the joyful sound, through the silver trumpet of the gospel, and the song of Zion. It is a place of *pomp* and *splendour*; the seat of the King; where are the King's court, the King's throne, the throne of grace, and daily access to "see the King in his beauty." It is a place of *privileges*, a privileged place; where there are privileges belonging to the church visible; they have the fountain open to them. God instructs them by his word, corrects them by his rod, reproves them by his servants, and when they go aside, directs them by his word, saying, "This is the way." They have ordinances, assemblies, ministers, and a right to choose the ministers and officers of the city. This is the privilege of every city, much more of the city of God; and if the city want this, it is so far a city robbed and spoiled. There are privileges belonging to the church invisible, such as pardon of sin, peace with God, sanctification, eternal life, access to the King's table, the Lamb, the light of the place and the temple. The Lord himself is the temple they come to. They have a title unto the new Jerusalem, the King's pass for heaven: "I appoint unto you a kingdom."

Remark 2. That the church is a *little* city, it is a little flock. (Luke xii. 32.) It is but a small spot, compared with the vast wilderness of this world; and but a little city in the eyes of the world, little and contemned. And, indeed, the true citizens are but little in their own eyes; "less than the least of all saints; less than the least of all God's mercies;" yea, nothing in their own account, and less than nothing, worse than nothing. The church is a *little* city: "A little stone cut out of the mountain;" yet many great cities and kingdoms have fallen before it. This little city has outlived the great city Nineveh, the magnificent Tyrus, and trampled upon the graves of many famous and remarkable cities, because, though it be a little city, yet it is "the city of the great God;" and "glorious things are spoken of this city of God." (Psalm lxxxvii. 3.)

Remark 3. That it is a city of *men*: "a little city," and "*men* in it." The infinite wisdom of God hath seen fit to make this famous little city consist, not of fallen angels, but of fallen men. * *

Remark 4. That this little city hath but *few* men in it, even the visible church. I mean, those that have a visible and credible profession of faith are few in comparison of the rest of the world; and the invisible church, who have the power of religion and the truth of faith, are but very few in comparison of the bulk of professors. This little city, then, has but "few men within it," as the text says. Many are without the city, and many are about the city, but few are within the city, and they only are safe; for "without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, idolaters, murderers, and whosoever

loveth and maketh a lie. (Rev. xxii. 15.) Without are drunkards, swearers, sabbath breakers, profane persons; yea, besides the openly profane, without are formalists, hypocrites, unbelievers; but within are saints, believers, lovers of God. "Many are called, but few are chosen." Yea, we may say, there are many by-comers, but few indwellers; many in-comers, like dogs, that go out again: "They go out from us, because they are not of us, (1 John ii. 19;) but few indwellers, like "children of Zion," and "fellow citizens with the saints." (Eph. ii. 19.) The rest of the world, whether they be by-comers or not, they are not to be reckoned men, but rather dogs and beasts; for thus all that are out of Christ, and so out of the city, are called. Thus, in the vast populous city of Jerusalem, a man could not be found: "Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if you can find a man." Why not a man? No; they were only to be reckoned men "who execute judgment," and "sought the truth." But such could not be found, they were all degenerate into beasts; all transformed through brutish affections into unreasonable creatures; yet of Zion it shall be said, "This man and that man was born there;" but they are but here and there one: "A little city, and few men within it."

(To be continued.)

GOSPEL RIGHTEOUSNESS.

BY JOHN BUNYAN.

You may ask me next, But which of those are *first* bestowed upon the Christian? Is it the perfect righteousness of Christ unto justification? Answer: The perfect righteousness of Christ unto justification must first be made over to him by an act of grace. This is evident,

First. Because he is justified as "ungodly;" that is, whilst he is ungodly. But by this righteousness God justifieth the ungodly, by imputing it to them when and while they, as to a principle of grace, are graceless.

This is further manifest thus: The person must be accepted before his performance can be: "And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering." (Gen. iv. 4.) If he had respect unto Abel's person first, yet he must have respect unto it for the sake of some righteousness; but Abel as yet had no righteousness, for *that* he acted after God had respect unto his person: "And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect."

The prophet Ezekiel also shows us this where, by the similitude of the wretched infant, and of the maner of God's receiving it to mercy, he shows that he received Jerusalem to favour. First, saith he, "I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness." There is justification: "I covered thy nakedness." But what manner of nakedness was it? Yes, it was then as naked as naked could be,

even as naked as the day that it was born. (Ezek. xvi. 4, 9.) And as thus naked, it was covered; and with anything but the skirt of Christ? that is, with his robe of righteousness, with his obedience that he performed of himself for that very purpose? No; for "by the obedience of one many are made righteous."

Secondly. Righteousness unto justification must be first, because the first act that a Christian performeth to God must be accepted, not for the sake of the principle in the heart from which it flows, nor yet for the sake of the person that acts it, but for the sake of Christ, whose righteousness it is by which the sinner stands just before God. And hence it is said, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." (Heb. xi. 4.) By faith he did it, but by faith in respect to the righteousness that justifies, for we are justified by faith; not by faith as it is an acting grace, but the righteousness of faith; that is, by that righteousness that faith embraceth, layeth hold of, and helpeth the soul to rest and trust to for justification of life, which is the obedience of Christ. Besides, it is said by faith he offered; faith, then, in Christ was precedent to his offering.

Now, since faith was in act before his offering, and since before his offering he had no personal goodness of his own, faith must look out from home, I say, to another for righteousness; and finding the righteousness of Christ to be the righteousness which by God was designed to be performed for the justification of a sinner, it embraceth it, and through it offereth to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.

Hence it follows, "By which he obtained witness that he was righteous;" "by which," not by his offering, but by his faith; for his offering, simply as an offering, could not have made him righteous, if he had not been righteous before: for "an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit." Besides, if this be granted, why had not God respect to Cain's offering as well as Abel's? For did Abel offer? so did Cain. Did Abel offer his best? so did Cain his. And if with this we shall take notice of the order of their offering, Cain seemed to offer first, and so with the frankest will and forwardest mind; but yet, saith the text, "The Lord had respect to Abel and to his offering." But why to Abel? why, because his person was made righteous before he offered the gift: "By which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts," that they were good and acceptable, because they declared Abel's acceptance of the righteousness of Christ, through the riches of the grace of God.

By faith, then, Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. He shrouded himself under the righteousness of Christ and so of that righteousness he offered to God. God also looking and finding him there, (where he could not have been, as to his own apprehension, otherwise than by faith,) accepted his gift; by which acceptation (for so you may understand it also) God testified that he was righteous; for God receiveth not the gifts and offerings of those that are not righteous, for their sacrifices are abominable unto him. (Prov. xxi. 27.)

Abel then was, I say, made righteous; first, as he stood ungodly in himself: "God justifieth the ungodly." (Rom. iv. 5.) Now, being justified, he was righteous; and being righteous, he offered his sacrifice of praise to God, or other offerings, which God accepted because he believed in his Son.

Thirdly. Righteousness by an imputation must be first, because we are made so, to wit, by another: "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Now, to be made righteous implies a passiveness in him that is so made, and the activity of the work to lie in somebody else: except he had said they have made themselves righteous; but that it doth not, nor doth the text leave to any the least countenance so to insinuate; nay, it plainly affirms the contrary, for it saith, "By the obedience of one man, Jesus Christ, many are made righteous;" "By the righteousness of one." (Romans v.) So then, if they be made righteous by the righteousness of one, then are they that are so, as to themselves, passive, and not active, with reference to the working out of this righteousness. They have no hand in that; for that is the act of one, the righteousness of one, the obedience of one, the workmanship of one, even Christ Jesus.

Again. If they are made righteous by this righteousness, then also they are passive as to their first privilege by it; they do not make themselves righteous by it.

Imputation is also the act of God. "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness." The righteousness, then, is a work of Christ, his own obedience to his Father's law; the making of it ours is the act of the Father, and of his infinite grace: "For of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness." "For God hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." And both these things God showed to our first parents, when he acted in grace towards them after the fall.

There it is said the Lord God made unto Adam and unto his wife coats of skins, and clothed them. (Gen. iii. 21.)

1. That Adam and his wife were naked, both in God's eye and in their own. (Verses 10, 11.)

2. That the Lord God made coats of skins.

3. That in his making of them he had respect to Adam and to his wife, that is, he made them for them.

4. That when he had made them, he also clothed them therewith.

They made not the coats, nor did God bid them make them; but God did make them himself to cover their nakedness with. Yea, when he had made them, he did not bid them put them on, but he himself did clothe them with them; for thus runs the text: "Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." Oh! it was the Lord God that made this coat with which a poor sinner is made righteous; and it is also the Lord God that putteth it upon us.

But now, if a man is not righteous before he is made so, before the Lord God has by the righteousness of another made him so, then whether this righteousness comes first or last, the man is not righteous until it cometh; and if he be not righteous until it cometh, then what works soever are done before it comes, they are not the works of a righteous man, nor the fruits of good tree, but of a bad. And so again, this righteousness must first come before a man be righteous, and before a man does righteousness. "Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good."

Now, since a man must be made righteous before he can do righteousness, it is manifest his works of righteousness do not make him righteous, no more than the fig makes its own tree a fig-tree, or than the grape doth make its own vine a vine. Hence those acts of righteousness that Christian men do perform are called "the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God." (Phil. i. 11.)

The fruits of righteousness they are by Jesus Christ, as the fruits of a tree are by the tree itself; for the truth is, that principle of righteousness of which mention has been made before, and concerning which I have said it comes in the second place, it is also originally to be found for us nowhere but in Christ.

Hence it is said to be by Jesus Christ; and again: "Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace." (John i. 16.) A man must then be united to Christ first, and so being united, he partaketh of this benefit, to wit, a principle that is supernatural, spiritual, and heavenly. Now, his being united to Christ is not of or from himself, but of and from the Father, who as to this work is the Husbandman; even as the twig that is grafted into the tree officiateth not, that is, grafteth not itself thereunto, but is grafted in by some other, itself being utterly passive as to that. Now, being united unto Christ, the soul is first made partaker of justification, or of justifying righteousness; for he is made righteous by the obedience of Christ; he being also united to Christ, partaketh of the root and fulness of Christ: the fulness of grace that is laid up in him being communicated unto us, even as the branch that is grafted into the olive-tree partaketh of the root and fulness of the olive-tree. Now, partaking thereof, it quickeneth, it groweth, it buddeth, and yieldeth fruit to the praise and glory of God. (Rom. xi. 17.)

In that which hath been said is something of the mystery of God's will in his way with the elect; and such a mystery it is, that it lieth hid for ever from nature and natural men; for they think of nothing less than of this, nor of nothing more, when they think of their souls and of salvation, that something must be done by themselves to reconcile them to God. Yea, if through some common convictions their understandings should be swayed to a consenting to that, that justification is of grace by Christ, and not of works by man; yet conscience, reason, and the law of nature, not being as yet subdued by the power and glory of grace unto the obedience of Christ, will rise up in rebellion against this doctrine, and will overrule and bow down the soul against the law and works thereof for life.

Fourthly. Righteousness by imputation must be first, because else, faith which is a part, yea, a greater part of that which is called a principle of grace in the soul, will have nothing to fix itself upon nor a principle to work by. Let this, therefore, be considered by those that are on the contrary side.

Faith, so soon as it has a being in the soul, is like the child that has a being in the mother's lap; it must have something to feed upon, and not something at a distance, afar off, to be purchased, (I speak now as to justification from the curse,) but something by promise made over of grace to the soul; something to feed upon, to support from the fears of perishing by the curse for sin. Nor can it rest content with all duties and performances that other graces shall put the soul upon; nor with any of its own works, until it reaches and takes hold of the righteousness of Christ. Faith is like the dove, which found no rest any where until it returned to Noah into the ark.

EXTRACT.

The life of faith is called the fight of faith; and truly called so. For where divine faith is given, it is seldom exercised without a conflict in the heart, which loves an earthly refuge, and dreads a naked promise; dearly loves a human prop, and always seeks some wooden buttress to support God's iron pillar. Hear what the Saviour says of himself: "I have trodden the wine-press alone: I looked, and there was none to help; therefore mine own arm brought salvation." (Isa. lxiii. 3—5.) Hear what a prophet says of him: "Behold! the Lord God will come with a strong hand, and his arm shall rule; he shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arms, and he shall carry them in his bosom," (Isa. xl. 10, 11;) where you may observe all partners are excluded from the work. The Lord Jesus, who is called the Lord God, shall act the part of a shepherd, and lay down his life for the sheep; and by treading the wine-press alone, shall make the atonement himself. Then he will gather the flock, and feed the flock, and carry the flock home himself. Jesus Christ does not help you to help yourself; but he does the whole work himself; his own arm shall rule. Indeed, where men are quickened by the Holy Ghost, and well convinced of their sinfulness and helplessness, they are now enabled to use the means of grace properly, and must use them diligently; but the whole work still is in the Saviour's hand. He must guide the understanding by his Spirit into all living truth; he must bring his blessed peace to the conscience; he must tame the tempers, sanctify the affections, and work in us to will and do. "It has pleased the Father, that in Christ Jesus all fulness should dwell." (Col. i. 19.) All fulness of wisdom to direct us, of power to protect us, of grace to pardon and sanctify us; and this "all fulness" is treasured up in Christ, the Head, to be communicated to the members of his body. Whatever wisdom, strength, peace, or righteousness, is not received from his storehouse by faith, is spurious, a mere tinsel ware, which may glitter much, but has no value.—*Berridge.*

A LETTER BY MR. HUNTINGTON.

The epistle of my sister is come safe, and now lies before me. It is, according to the prophet Habakkuk, a song of various things, sung in various tunes.

Your days have been sorrow, and your travail grief. Call this time of adversity Gad, for there is a troop behind; or call them the beginning of sorrows, for unbelief will often tell you that there will be no end of them. Satan is a skilful adversary; he can alter both his appearance and his influence. While I lay in the dark regions of the shadow of death, under the arrests of divine justice, and filled with fury and the rebukes of my God, he worked constantly upon the hardness of my heart, the carnal enmity of my mind, and on that soul-destroying sin of unbelief, in which I was shut up. He took occasion to multiply his accusations, by the sins which stood before my eyes, the burden of guilt which I felt, and the wrath of the law which worked in me. And I know that this was the devil and the works of him; but after my deliverance had been proclaimed, my calling made clear, and my election sure, he came to me again, so altered in appearance, in language, and in influence, that I really did not know my old acquaintance. He came not now in his sable garb, but in his shining robe; not to attend my funeral to hell and the grave, but as a friend at my wedding; not to accuse, but to give me counsel; not to drive, but to draw; not to sink me into despair, but to lift me up to the wind, and make me ride upon it; not to reproach me, but to praise; not to tell me what an awful rebel I had been, but what a saint I then was. Satan had changed his voice.

And surely among them that are born of woman there had not appeared a greater wonder than Parson Sack. I, not in the least suspecting this strange visitor to be one of the king of Babylon's ambassadors, was pleased with his coming as much as Hezekiah was, and showed him all my precious things; for he came not with heavy tidings, but with smooth things; not as a destroyer, but as a builder up. He treated of the goodness and safety of my state, of the height of divine favour in which I stood, and of my certain arrival at the desired haven. From this he descended to the small number of God's elect; very small, when compared to the world at large. And as he preached, so he endeavoured to apply the doctrine. He worked his bottle-screw into my natural affections, and made my bowels sound. He set before me all my little ones, and my dame, as not included in the bond of the covenant; and then operated upon and influenced every tender feeling I had. My compassion, earnest desires, &c. &c., began to rise up and flow out at such a rate, just as Milton describes the lust of Adam and Eve working in them, after they had eaten the forbidden fruit, till they conceived it was now divinity springing up within them. And so I thought that my heart was filled with grace. Having worked me up to the highest pitch of natural affection for my wife and children, he then left the old hen and chickens, and led my mind abroad to my friends and relations: then to my old acquaintance; next to many tender-hearted, pitiful, and well-meaning people that I knew in the world. And still my

heart enlarged, and as he presented them to view, so I took them in. Then he came to the nations at large; still my heart opened and extended as he brought them to bear upon my mind. Then the poor heathens were presented to my view, until my bowels sounded like a harp, not only for Moab, but for all these. And then the irrevocable decrees of God were set before me, just as they are set forth by the Arminians. And next the devils were presented to me as objects of my pity. And this last imagery discovered the cheat. Satan could no longer be hid; and I remembered his former fiery darts, and soon was delivered from the snare of the fowler. However, this was of use to me in the ministry; for from that time I knew most assuredly who it was that instructed, furnished, equipped, and sent out the whole herd of Arminian teachers; for sure I am that it is the devil transformed that supplies them all.

Some time after this he paid me another visit, similar to the last. At that time I was in the ministry; he came now as a parson-maker, to instruct me how to proceed in the important work. And that was, to draw no lines between saints and sinners; to make no applications; to enforce no marks, evidences, love-tokens, or sure tokens; to insist upon no criterions, characteristics, infallible proofs, signs, or touchstones; and then I should give no offence, nor should I raise any bars of prejudice against me, nor have any stigma upon my character; my usefulness would be extensive, and my reputation a sweet savour to all. I should endeavour to cast my net so as to take in all that came within the walls of my meeting, and endeavour to win all to love me; and those who love a believer are passed from death to life. This plan I intended to adopt; but when I was in the work, the fire of zeal, of love, fervour, holy fear, boldness, and fortitude, flowed into me; so that instead of crying a confederacy, I became a divider and scatterer wherever I went. The hypocrite hissed, and the honest soul felt the energy; and soon God led me to see this stratagem of the devil; and I learnt this lesson by it, that of all the workmen of God, and of all the works of God under heaven, except the death of Christ, a minister of the Spirit and the Holy Ghost's work on the souls of men are the greatest enemies to Satan. He has no objection to external reformation, if there be no internal regeneration. It is the Holy Spirit that casts out the strong man armed, takes away his armour wherein he trusted, spoils his house, and takes the prey from the mighty. Having escaped this snare, through the good hand of my God upon me, he paid me one more visit in his counterfeit rags; at which time he set before me all the real and imaginary evils and dangers that would attend me in the perilous work of the ministry; the oppositions from the world, from heretics and hypocrites; the hunger, cold, and nakedness, that I was exposed to; the treachery of pretended friends; the difficult work of getting to be clear in the greatest mysteries of religion, and of escaping all errors; the danger of my life by the way, and of death at the end in a hundred forms; together with the uncertainty of the Lord's presence, aid, and support, which he argued from the sad desertions which had lately befallen me. He then showed me my own safety, the goodness of my state,

and the happiness which would occur if I withdrew to some lonely place, and kept all the dealings of God with me locked up in my own breast. But this not succeeding, he soon made good his predictions; for there was not a tool, falsely called a gospel minister, in town or country, but what was barking, biting, warning, or cautioning people against me. And this has continued, without intermission, for twenty-four years and upwards; and I should think it an ill omen should it cease, which I am in no fear or danger of, seeing the devil has stocked the nation with so many novices whom he puffs up with pride, till they fall under the same sentence that fell upon him.

The bowels of compassion and the inordinate affection that you felt for your sick child, and the rebellion against God that attended it, you may safely conclude, were the effects of a visit from this transformed devil. For God is as well able to regenerate a child as a man; and can perform that good work in the last moment now, as well as in the thief upon the cross. "His hand is not shortened." Besides, you have no scripture to prohibit or forbid your praying for your child, nor yet for the life of the child, supposing you conclude with, "Not my will, but thine be done." And if we cannot say this from the heart, then we can pray for submission that we may do it. David fasted, cried, and prayed all day and all night long for his child, though God by his prophet had declared it should die. He prayed even against the revealed will of God. But your prayer would have been according to his will. This is plain, because the child is restored to you again, even without being prayed for. God will have us at his feet; and it is not a little crossing and trying that will bring us there and keep us there. To be stripped of all comfort, and to be laid in irons for a whole year, and this attended with intolerable hardness of heart; to be left free among the dead and be given up to the influence of a sleepy devil, who shall give you a dose of his opium under every prayer that is put up and under every sermon that is preached; this, this will be worse than all the afflictions that have befallen little Isaac. So I conclude, and so you shall confess. Call it one more secret from the locks of Samson.

W. HUNTINGTON.

I WILL PARDON WHOM I RESERVE.

Dear —,—,—There is a substantial pleasure enjoyed when the Lord enables us to rest upon his Person, meditate upon his fulness, and leave all our enemies in his hands.

My trials of late have been severe; and, as is usual when this is the case, I have seen much of my own depravity. But I will not stain this paper by recording the rebellion I have manifested against my best Friend: suffice it to say, I am brought more and more to loath myself on account of all my abominations. However, the Lord has not forsaken me, nor has he rewarded me according to my works. But in mercy he has visited me with his presence, by the powerful application of his word.

You will ask, "What satisfactory evidence have you that you are not deceived?" I answer, The effects which his presence produces upon me. His presence manifested within me silences every enemy, puts my unbelief to the blush, stops my murmuring, and produces genuine peace in my soul.

I am a wayward and perverse creature, for after the sweetest visits of the Lord Jesus, the first enemy that appears I begin to parley with; instead of giving the foe no quarter, I listen until my peace is gone, my confidence shaken, and I reel to and fro between hope and despair. But even this, under the direction of our wise Mediator, works for my good. It teaches me my dependence upon the Lord's omnipotent arm for support, his wisdom for direction, his grace for pardon, and his righteousness to cover me, that I may not stand naked before God.

It is painful to be daily discovering more of our own weakness, yet it is absolutely needful. Speaking from my own experience and the knowledge I have of myself, I am persuaded that were I not emptied from vessel to vessel, buffeted with fierce temptations, tormented with an evil heart, harassed with the lukewarmness of real friends and the treachery of false ones, I should be under the influence of a false peace, resting short of the Rock Christ. But as it is, with a little gratitude, which I feel at this moment, I can say it is not so. I am constrained to turn from the church, and the world, and myself, with everything of an earthly nature, for a few moments' communion with my best Beloved. It is a taste of his love which thus constrains me. And then under the same influence I move forward. I behold him with the eye of faith, and the beauty and excellency of his Person ravish my whole soul; while the virtue of his blood sprinkled upon me by the true Spirit of Truth convinces me of its efficacy, because it absolves me from guilt, and takes the fear of hell, death, and judgment away. And is not this according to the promise, "I will pardon them whom I reserve?" "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." I who have been such an egregious sinner, am made to feel and believe that this blood once shed has atoned for all my transgressions, and blotted them out of the book of God's remembrance!

Again. The freeness of it presents itself to me, which I am at a loss for language to describe. Had we merited this boundless blessing we should be furnished with the key to open the enigma; this would unravel the mystery. But merit cannot be the procuring cause, for we possess nothing by nature but sin. The word of truth furnishes us with an answer: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love," and all things have taken place according to God's righteous disposal: "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." We must ever affirm love to be the cause, the spring, the fountain whence every blessing flows.

That you, with the whole church of the living God, may have many sweet draughts of this love, which is ever flowing from the fountain, Christ, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

W. J.

CHASTENING.

“Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.”—HEB. xii. 26.

My dear Friend,—Yours came with the enclosed book, which I like and thank you kindly for. I received your letter in answer to mine. I approved of it; and there was no foolish thing in it, as you supposed you made use of, which prevented my writing again. I assure you that I am not the person that criticises words; I look to the *communication*. When I hear persons relate their experience or preach, I rely alone on the communication. Does it communicate bonds, or stir up a bad spirit? If so, I cannot receive it, however near the spirit of the truth it seems to approach, or however others, even God's children, may speak well of it. It is not whom man commendeth, but whom the Holy Ghost commendeth. Now, yours did not communicate bonds, nor stir up a bad spirit; therefore, I had no authority to refuse it. I like your letters, because you have your exercises, and you write about them; which meets the cases of others.

You say, the Lord has gone out in providence against you the last year. O my friend, Providence has thwarted me, it seems, almost in everything I put my hand to. The Lord is teaching me more and more how much I stand in need of his instruction, both in providence and grace. I am under a trial now as great it seems as ever I had to cope with, and I know not what the end will be. I have almost continual sorrow of heart. My prayer is, “O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me.” My heart at times is very contracted with trouble, but now and then I feel with dear Hart, that

“Love and grief compound an unction,
Both to cleanse and heal.”

“Balm is useless to the unfeeling,” &c.

Lately I was kept awake hours by grief, and got up in the morning very cast down. But soon I found the compounding going on within, which had a cleansing, humbling effect. It is very painful, yet very blessed to feel. It is as much an operation in the soul, as compounding is an operation in chemistry, or fermentation in brewing, &c. I find

“Trials give new life to prayer.”

They humble me and keep me low; and with my trials I find a cry kept alive in my soul. Without trials I should have been too much like the world; but with trials I differ from the world and the spirit of the world; so that the word holds good, “That ye may not be condemned with the world.” The Lord's chastening is very grievous, yet “afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness.” O my friend, the crucifying of the flesh is health to the soul. As the Head, so the members; we must be crucified to the world before we renounce it. If prosperity smile, we are bewitched with her charms. I find I need trials as much as a vessel needs ballast; yet no one would sooner escape them. Mine are

never of the right kind. "Anything but this, Lord; do enable me to bear up under it; do give me strength to bear whatever thy pure eyes see fit to lay upon me," is my prayer.

My dear friend, at this present time I know not how I shall be brought through, and I would be thankful that I have a God to go to with my trials. Before this came on, I was under a trial which I have seen the end of. Hart was very suitable:

"If pain afflict, or wrongs oppress,
If cares distract, or fears dismay,
If guilt deject, if sin distress,
The remedy's before thee—pray."

Afterwards, in pouring out my soul to the Lord, I had a sweet and blessed time. I could commune with the dear Lord as a man communes with his friend. And this was after I thought I had very much displeased the Lord, in not accepting what I believed he had sent me in answer to prayer, and I had, it seemed, hundreds of pardons to beg, and backslidings and baseness of heart to plead. The Lord, however, was very good, and forgave me, and assured me of it by the above testimony.

We had one of our children very afflicted. About last Christmas he had inflammation on the chest, with an abscess on the back or lower part of the shoulder blade. He was only a year and a quarter old, poor dear sufferer. The medical man and all our friends said that he must die, but the Lord restored him. I could tell the Lord he could do as he liked with him. Since then my wife has had her ninth child; with a sinking business, and very many trying things in it. But "why should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" I know of all men I have no right, yet "murmur at it still." May the Lord help us to cast all our care on Him who is the great Burden-bearer.

I should have much to tell you if we met, that is, if the Lord opened our mouths and hearts for conversation. I wished to answer your letter, but I have great aversion to writing in general, unless I am obliged.

May the dear Lord ever keep us from rebellion, and may we fall down and become as little children. I feel disposed to take a very low place, and be content if the Lord will enable me to bear and forbear with his family, and support me under my trials, bring me through, and give me testimonies of his covenant-love and grace, in my poor soul. I feel I have enough to contend with, without stirring up man's wrath.

Poor Fowler was a dear gracious man of God. I trust I found reading his Life do my soul much good. I had two sweet blessings in reading it. I heard him preach twice. I thought him a very exercised, well taught man of God.

The poor tried woman you speak of has her trials about her soul. We are assured that we are on the road to heaven; yet in the path of tribulation trials surround us, which humble us and make us fit companions for the children of God, that are brought along this way. But perhaps that poor woman has hell pictured before her eyes ready

to receive her seemingly, as I had before I knew the pardon of my sins. I had mercy extended to me, and may the Lord extend it to her. It does my soul good to hear or read of such things taking place in the Lord's family. But to see the hands of professors strengthened, and it is to be feared a false work set up in the place of a real work of grace, is heart-sickening; and by not countenancing the same, one gets many enemies where friendship was professed; but where the work of grace is brought about in a man's soul by terrible things in righteousness, there is not much swerving from truth.

When I wrote the foregoing, which was the day I received your kind letter, I was very downcast in my poor mind; but since then God has condescended to appear for me in blessing my soul; I could commune with the dear Lord of life and glory as a man communes with his friend. O what a privilege for such poor bowed-down creatures as we to hold converse with the dear Redeemer, and that of the most familiar kind! O it is a high privilege indeed, which none know but the redeemed; and they are prepared for this by trouble. O what a kind God, to appear for us when we most need him! What a blessing to be enabled to say, "My God, thou shalt be my God even unto death." I am surrounded with trouble, but with my God I shall surmount them all, as he blesses my soul, and enables me to bear up under every pressure.

On Monday morning last I felt myself very low again, and it seemed I must sink with it, (although I had such a blessing, which lasted from one o'clock in the day till I went to bed, the day before;) but in reading a chapter in Isaiah, the Lord again blessed my soul, and took away the burden of my trial, which I have not found so heavy since. I desire to feel thankful for this. Romaine's "Walk of Faith," 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11th chapters, is again my element; and the "Triumph of Faith," on Sunday last, the dear Lord bore testimony to in my soul. I believe in my soul that the Lord inspired that dear man to write them.

They were lately blessed to a poor tried woman, I think the most down-cast poor soul I ever knew as a female. She has been so low in her mind, that a lunatic asylum has been looked out for her. I recommended them to her, telling her how the Lord had blessed them to me, and she was induced to read them, and the Lord was pleased to bless them to her soul. My heart has bled for her, as it were. How have I begged for her sometimes with sorrow of heart! and sometimes the Lord has so filled my heart with joy when I have been pleading for her, that I cannot express it, and I am truly glad to hear, from time to time, that the Lord is overruling all her trials for the good of her soul. I had the privilege to spend about two hours with her about two years since, quite accidentally on our parts, but, I believe, not on God's; and the Lord blessed our souls. Our heart burnt within us, while he (bless his dear name) talked to us by the way.

I am glad that you feel for the poor and needy. Whose company besides is worth seeking? None are companions for me but those in trouble, or those who have been brought through it, and humbled

thereby; all other company is irksome to me in general, especially if I am in trouble. I often sympathize with my fellow-creatures if they are bowed down with trials, if they are only of the world.

August 7th. The Lord has been very kind and gracious to me to-day, in blessing my soul. I find my heart soft and my spirit humble, and the dear Lord is exalted in my affections. The Trinity in unity is the theme and delight of my soul. He engrosses my affections. Before I was afflicted with trials, I went astray, as David says; now I feel so tender that a newspaper or the world is a trial to me; I want them not; but the word of God is my delight. I have an appetite: "I found thy word, and I did eat it." The Lord Jesus is the chiefest among ten thousand. He is the dear Lamb of God, that I would trust ten thousand souls with if I had them.

May the Lord bless you and your cause, bring you through all your troubles, and reveal himself most sweetly to you when you are most bowed down, and most need his presence, and that will make amends for all. I expect little else but trouble in this troublesome world; but I do expect and live in hopes that the more I am tried, the more I shall have of the dear Lord's presence, to cheer me on this dreary road. And this enables me to hope that I shall bear patiently whatever is designed for me, or rather, that I have a hope that patience will be given.

Yours, in love and affection,

Devizes, 1846.

R. DREDGE.

[The writer of the above letter was removed from this vale of tears in the autumn of 1847, and made a most happy and blessed end. He left a widow and nine children, of whom one died shortly after him, and was interred in the same grave. His widow and family were left in very indifferent circumstances, but the providence of God has so signally appeared in their behalf, that were all the circumstances mentioned, it would fill every believing heart with wonder and admiration. He was fully persuaded on his death-bed, from some passage applied to his soul, that the Lord would take care of his wife and family, and this He is now doing in a remarkable manner. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." (Psalm xxxvii. 25.)]

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOT IN WORD, BUT IN POWER.

My Dear —, — Yesterday we had very favourable weather and there were many hearers. One of the church here, who lives at B—, I went to see on Saturday, —. The poor man is in a decline, aged fifty-two; the Lord has blessed his soul, and he has been favoured in his illness. How certain is death! If death and eternity be much thought about, there will be thoughts also about the blessedness of true religion. God's children want to realize the foretaste of those blessed realities; they are very precious. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God that giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

What a favour to have testimonies that we are born again and are amongst the redeemed, who are able to say by divine faith, that

Jesus Christ "hath saved us, and washed us in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God for ever and ever!" What blessed characters! We have Jesus Christ set forth in God's word; but he must be revealed in, and made known to us by the Spirit, for all other knowledge is vain! "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." Those who are really called by divine grace are sure to be proved and tried; and will find many things within and without to carnalize and deaden the soul. But the great concern is, whether there be a lamenting and mourning over their sin and the depravity of their heart, with real desires for heavenly mindedness, and for a sense of God's love and mercy. The heart being so deceitful, and Satan's wiles being so blinding and ensnaring, how many are deceived with a false confidence! If they had a little true light, they would wonder they could ever have been deceived with such an empty profession. But if the heart be hardened through sin, and the eyes blinded by Satan, how can they know where they stand in divine things? It is a great mercy to be proved and tried, and to learn our weakness, helplessness, and insufficiency, and how destitute we are of faith, love, and joy, and all the blessed fruits of the Spirit, except as we receive out of Christ's fulness. So there is no room for boasting. "Who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" How the Lord hath ordained that there shall be no real glorifying, except in Jesus Christ! "Ye are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." It is usually by degrees that real religion is carried on in the souls of God's people; "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little."

How God in mercy leads his people about, and instructs them, and keeps them as the apple of his eye! You and I have professed religion a good many years, and now we are constrained to say, How long-suffering God is! and that we have no hope of salvation except through being washed in the precious blood of Christ, and justified in his righteousness. "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works."

It is nineteen years this month since I preached that sermon in Helen's great church at A——, which gave such great offence to the regular church-going folks. Then I could see it was a great mercy to have a true and real religion, that would do to die by; but I did not know the evils of my heart, and the Lord's goodness and mercy manifested to my soul, as I have been led to know since. Grace must be tried. There is no easy and smooth way to heaven. For the last hundred and sixty years we have had the Toleration Act, (1688, the year Bunyan died;) so there has been no fan of that kind to separate the chaff from the wheat, as there was in Bunyan's days and previously. If an order were issued that all the Dissenters should go to church on Christmas-day or pay one hundred pounds, or be imprisoned and kept to hard labour for six months, it would try the religion of many of us. But the church of God would shine and be brightened through such furnaces. The chaff would be

sifted, the wheat would be brought closer together, and there would be more love and union. Though nearly all professors of religion allow that crosses and trials do their religion good, yet there is a shrinking from suffering in the flesh. How many are upon good terms with themselves, and think they have a good faith; but it is merely notion!

“To see good bread and wine,
Is not to eat and drink;
So some who hear the word divine,
Do not believe, but think,

“True faith’s the life of God;
Deep in the heart it lies;
It lives and labours under load;
Though damp’d, it never dies.”

At times how precious are the testimonies that God has given me that I am his child! How blessed is the enjoyment of the spirit of adoption! It is what we desire to see babes in Christ longing for, or those that have been blessed with it asking God to renew it.

“To look on this when sunk in fears;
Whilst each repeated sight,
Like some reviving cordial, cheers,
And makes temptations light.”

What a great work is a work of grace in a sinner’s soul! And what a great work is the work of the ministry! But it needs power from above to make these matters weighty; we are so corrupt and full of unbelief. The world ensnares and allures, and we need rods, fires, furnaces, besides crosses and trials, to purge us of our dross and sin. We cannot cleanse ourselves of our idols. The Lord must cleanse us of them and keep us, and work in us to will and to do. Will the loving father sink the boat that has his wife and children in it? Will the man who knows gold to be so dear to him, sink his bag in the sea that has all his gold and securities? But God can make a man renounce and leave his idols through his mighty power. Soul troubles or spiritual enjoyments have a great effect upon the heart.

“My dear Redeemer, purge this dross, &c.
Then help me by thy grace to bear
Whate’er thou send’st to purge my dross;
If in his crown I have to share,
Why should I grudge to bear his cross?”

If through God’s mercy we get safely to glory, we shall have no cause to complain of the way the Lord has brought us; for when God sweetly blesses our souls now, we neither complain of the past nor fret about the future. We can say, “My Jesus has done all things well.” How little all things here below are when compared with eternal things! What a wonderfully great Friend Jesus Christ is to the vilest sinners, in shedding his precious blood, in washing them from all their sins, in redeeming their souls from destruction, and opening a way for them to enter into eternal glory, to have pleasures at God’s right hand for evermore! Yours affectionately,

Abingdon, Dec., 1848.

W. T.

SUPERABOUNDING GRACE.

Dear Friend,—You have very likely been wondering within yourself how it is (and perhaps you have felt grieved) that I have not written to you before. Allow me to leave the causes, and only say that I have attempted to write several times during the last month, but have been hindered each time.

And now, as a pensioner on Divine bounty, I wish that the Lord, by the light and power of the Spirit, may direct my heart, mind, and pen, and favour us to meet in the unity and power of the Spirit, so that our souls may sensibly feel his precious bedewing influence and grace, and thus be made acceptable indeed in and to each other's conscience, through dipping our foot in oil, like Asher of old.

Yours came safely to hand, and I think I may say with the apostle, that I rejoiced for the consolation which God has given you in the time of need. I need not say that, though the righteous falleth seven times, he riseth up again. The Lord is making you acquainted in measure with this blessed truth. You know what it is to have a thick cloud between you and your God, and to be buffeted by Satan; you have light enough to see, yea, and life enough to feel, too, that all your comeliness is turned into utter deformity. You are a witness that the whole head is sick and the heart faint; that your wisdom is folly, and your strength weakness. O what trying things inwardly and outwardly are God's children oftentimes exercised with! O how the ungodly propensities of the flesh put themselves forth! Aye, and when a ray of divine light shines into the soul, (for this it is that causes the soul to see them, feel them, and groan under them,) we often say, in such a state of soul-darkness and trouble, "Can ever God dwell here?" Satan in such a time, if suffered of God, will come in like a flood. Nor does he forget to muster up the base revoltings, carnality, and rebellion of our depraved hearts against us. And then he calls conscience in for a witness against us. Ah! friend, Satan may lay as good a claim to the matchless mercy of God (that is, on the ground of merit) as I can. I do solemnly confess I have no hope at all of getting to heaven only through the matchless grace, Person, and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and this brought home, applied, revealed, made known, and carried on by the precious power of the Holy Ghost in my conscience.

Ah! I can honestly assure thee that there is no judgment in my goings, either in hearing, reading, calling upon the Lord, thinking, or acting, unless there is a little divine dew, and power inwardly felt to break my obdurate heart, to slay me to the world, to thrust back Satan, and to subdue cursed pride and concupisence, which have stuck fast to me, and haunted me these many years in the wilderness. And yet, through rich mercy, I trust I have many times sung victory, (and that feelingly,) through the blood and love of the Lamb, with contrition of heart before the Lord, and have been indulged to have sweet nearness of access to him, while I have in this blessed way had my strength renewed. The word of the Lord has been found and eaten; it has been sweeter than honey or

the honeycomb. Nor dare I say he has left off his former kindness altogether. Though my foolish heart has left him, fretted, and done evil a thousand times twice told; yet when a little sip of his mercy flows into my heart, it is now as in days gone by, I sing again, "He hath done all things well."

I feel and see that all was well done before time; well done by Christ as the Surety and Redeemer of his people in time; well done with respect to effectual vocation by the power of the Spirit; well in discovering my utter ruin and helplessness, and leading me, one who had merited hell, to the Lamb and his blood for full, free, and eternal salvation, and, though black as a negro, I must add, efficacious too.

O when the Sun of Righteousness shines into our poor hearts by the power of the Spirit, then it is that all his works praise him, and his saints bless him. Thus it is, I apprehend, that the accuser is proved a liar from the beginning. But he is an unwearied foe, and lurks in secret places; and though he cannot destroy a quickened soul, yet he will perplex him all he can. O for that precious admonition to be dropped by the blessed Spirit's power into our weak, unstable hearts, for truly I feel mine is so, viz., "Watch ye, stand fast, quit yourselves like men, be strong."

Ah! my friend, I am not one of those that can cultivate grace received. I feel that I still am, and hope to be kept, a pensioner on divine bounty. I need daily the quickening, illuminating, sanctifying, and upholding grace and power of the blessed Spirit put forth in my soul's experience, to show me where I am, what I am, and what I need, and to work in me will and power to enable me with godly simplicity and sincerity of heart to spread the whole of the matter before the Lord. Ah! and I need the same blessed power put forth daily and hourly, to hold my weak, unstable heart to the solemn and blessed employ of waiting on the Lord and for him, and to enable and constrain me with contrition and thanksgiving to acknowledge him in all things. O what poor, dry, hard work "saying" is, (for I cannot call it praying,) when left, as we think, to ourselves to feel our hearts as hard as stone and as dry as stubble. And if carried away by pride, the flesh, and the devil, then it is worse still; and we are brought again to trace all the ground over again, and come again to the footstool of mercy in our true character, as leprous and vile, suing for mercy as those that feel that they deserve eternal wrath, in the same way as we have received and tasted it in our souls. But ah! how abashed the poor leprous soul feels, (and well it may;) when a ray of divine light and life shines into the heart, and under the powerful influence thereof the poor soul is led to see and feel, with self-abhorrence before the Lord, the deceit, carnality, pride, and wretchedness, that have been mixed with all his doings! Thus, being turned again, the light of life shines into his heart, the transgression appears to be felt stamped in every place, and he feels as it were confounded before the Lord. And, perhaps, this is one of the ways that the Lord brings his children (or teaches them) to pray the effectual, fervent prayer of the righteous; and answers them in wondrous ways to the

joy of their hearts and the glory of his name. Like Israel in the days of Elijah, and Jonah when brought out of the fish's belly, they say, (as living witnesses,) "The Lord he is God;" "Salvation is of the Lord."

But I must close my scribble. You know what that man of God said, (or rather, God by him,) viz., "Love covereth a multitude of faults." If it had not been for this gracious declaration, I think I could not have written. But grace is just the same as it ever was, and will be. Therefore, having been indulged to feel a little unity, I ask you to drop me a hint by the way, for I wish to know how it fares with you.

Bedworth, Feb. 14th, 1843.

W. L.

THY MERCY, O LORD, IS THE THEME OF MY SONG.

My dear Friend,—I desire to thank you for your kind letter, which I received on the 26th of April; and when I received and read it, I did not think of letting it lie so long unanswered by me. But when I had a will to write, then I had no time; and when I had time, then I had no will; so that I have put it off day after day until I can put it off no longer.

When you wrote to me, your mind seemed to be much dwelling upon divine mercy and loving-kindness. And what can a poor guilty sinner talk about but the free mercy, goodness, and compassion of the Lord to such unworthy and worthless creatures as we are? O what mercy it is, that ever the Lord should so have thought upon *me* before time began as to fix his everlasting love upon vile *me*; that ever the Lord Jesus should have redeemed *me* unto God by his precious blood, so as to be without spot, and atoned for all my sins and transgressions; and that ever the Holy Ghost should have quickened *my* dead soul, and brought *me*, a perishing sinner, to the Lord Jesus Christ, and revealed salvation unto my guilty conscience, and sealed pardon and peace to my soul through the remission of sins! Thus my soul can join with yours and say, that it is a mercy indeed to know that all our sins are forgiven.

Again, you say that when your soul is thus favoured to have a view of what the Lord has done for you, the unworthiest of all his people, you appear to be a wonder to yourself. May the Lord ever keep your soul in that spot—to see and feel yourself the unworthiest of all his people; and then you will not be lifted up with pride as thousands are.

And what a bright mark of a man's sonship is godly humility! How the Lord hath promised throughout the Scriptures of truth to exalt the humble; and what a desire there is in the heart of a living soul to be made and kept humble! "The Lord heareth the desire of the humble;" "Thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear;" "He forgetteth not the cry of the humble;" and "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life." Then, my dear friend, what are the riches of this world? When the

Lord favours our heart and conscience with a sweet sight and feeling sense of Christ being formed in us the Hope of Glory, then it is that the most fine gold shines forth; a real and true value is put upon it, and it is greatly and highly prized; whilst the gold which perisheth loses its hold in the affections and sinks into dust. Then we hold the world with a loose hand, with all its riches, with a feeling that we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we shall carry nothing out; then we hold it as God's gift, as he being the great Husbandman and Lord and Master of all, and we as his stewards, with a desire to use his goods and not abuse them. And at such times as these the love of the world is subdued, the love of money sinks, worldly prosperity is not sought for, the soul's idols are cleansed away, the poor and needy lie near the heart, the glory of God is desired, the Lord Jesus is precious, eternity is in view, and godliness with contentment is found to be great gain.

At these times a man knows what true peace is in his own conscience, and he looks forward with a good hope that he shall die at rest and peace, and be for ever with Jesus, to sing his praise.

O my friend, to have a living religion, to live in and upon the Lord Jesus Christ is a mercy indeed; and to be blest to walk in God's fear and the comfort of the Holy Ghost, is a blessing to be highly prized by such poor worms of the earth as we.

Yours affectionately,

Woburn, May 25th, 1849.

T. G.

A LETTER BY THE LATE MR. GADSBY.

My dear Friend in the Lord of Zion,—Yours came to hand; and, God willing, I expect to be at O. for the 15th of October, but I really dare not at present engage to be with you for the 8th.

We find it hard work to get suitable supplies; and to-morrow the dissatisfied party begin a fresh interest, and are doing all in their power to draw the people away. I have no doubt all will end well, but at present the matter is trying. Yet through mercy the Lord does at this time enable me to feel quite resigned.

Give my love to Mr. W. and all friends, and I hope the dear Lord will enable him, you, and me to live near unto him, and hold sweet intercourse with him by a vital faith in the promise, love, and blood of the God-Man, the Lord the Lamb. Then, come what may, all will be well.

It is one thing to *talk* about living by faith, but another thing to *feel* the divine power of living faith in storms and tempests. What some people call faith is a pretty thing to play with in fine weather. But let men, sin, hell, and the devil be up in an uproar, all within and without appear dark and gloomy, and the Lord hide his face and withhold his manifestative mercy, this nice, pretty thing which they call faith will be like a straw in a hot fire.

Yet I know there is a faith which the Lord both can and does at

times give, that will *live* in such a tempest; and by the secret, succouring power of God it shall outstride the storm.

Through the riches of God's grace I have proved a little of this since I saw you last. O my dear friend, there is no God like our God, nor any faith like the faith of God's elect.

But this faith must be tried. It is not given to play with, but to prove the life and power of divine grace, and to prove that God is in every deed what he says he is—"a very present help in trouble." When troubles appear to overwhelm us, and all our natural strength is gone, and we are sinking and just ready to give the last gasp, then the Lord appears, draws faith into lively exercise, and enables us to triumph in the Lord, and sing the wonders of his love, promise, oath, and blood.

The Lord bless you and all friends.

Yours in the Lord,

W. GADSBY.

Manchester, August 5th, 1843.

A LETTER BY THE LATE MR. SYMONS, OF BRISTOL.

Dear Brother,—I am happy to hear the Lord's work still prospers at Dock;* and that you enjoy a sense of his goodness in your own soul. This will excite you to gratitude and thankfulness, and cause you to walk before him in sincerity and truth, without which religion is vain.

You complain of clouds and darkness. The people of God, whilst here, walk by faith, and not by sight. It is a mercy, if "darkness endure for a night," that the Lord has promised light and "joy shall come in the morning." "Blessed are they that know the joyful sound; they shall walk in the light of God's countenance."

How few do we meet with that enjoy this glorious privilege in its full import! What reason can we assign for this? The Lord has said, "he does not delight to afflict nor grieve the children of men." Example has a wonderful effect on the mind. The young professor hears those who, perhaps, have been many years in the way complain of great darkness. He, not knowing the cause, concludes he can expect no better, and so rests contented with living much beneath his privilege. This is a great bar to the enjoyment of the above blessing.

It is our inconsistent conduct, our sins, that separate between God and our souls. Were we more like the woman who went to the unjust judge, and would take no denial, till she had her request granted, there would not be so much complaining among professors as there now is. If a man who is destitute of the fear of God is by importunity to be prevailed on, how much more will the Lord hear and answer the prayers of his elect, who daily cry unto him! We receive not because we ask not; and when we ask, it is too often "amiss."

* Now Devonport.

Happy are they who are daily seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and are kept dependent on him for every blessing, temporal and spiritual; who desire to devote body, soul, and spirit to his service and glory!

Since I last wrote to you, I have experienced a little of the fatherly chastisements of a gracious God. From Christmas day to the 1st of February I was much indisposed, and incapable of performing my business; in which time also my wife and eldest boy were both taken ill. But on Sunday, February 1st, a sudden and very awful change took place. About one o'clock the child ate a very hearty dinner; after which I made a tumbler of gin and water for the man that had performed my business, who was about to return to Exeter. I gave little John three large teaspoonfuls; he took it in very eagerly, and would have drunk more, but I thought it sufficient. About half-past two I left him sitting in his little chair by the fire, and went to meeting, which is the next door to our house; but I had not been there more than five minutes before I was called out, returned home, and found my dear little boy a breathless corpse. We kept him till the Sunday following, and then interred his remains in the Baptist yard. The day after I wrenched my knee, by walking in deep snow, and for a fortnight performed my business with great difficulty. On Monday, the 3rd of February, I took my horse to ride in the country, and the supervisor with me. We had not ridden two miles before my horse fell, and I sprained my leg in a very violent manner, so that I was obliged to return. The supervisor went on, carried my books to Tiverton, and sent a man with them the next morning to perform the business. Carnal reason, if not borne down by divine grace, would be ready to say, "All these things are against me!" But "afflictions spring not out of the dust;" nor do troubles come by chance. They are all the kind appointments of an all-wise God, who has promised that all things shall work together for good to his people.

If I consider the Lord's late dealings with me in any point of view, I have reason to be thankful. I had promised myself many pleasing hours in instructing my little boy in things pertaining to life and godliness, as he was a child seemingly inclined to good. Though he could not spell, and in a strict sense could not be thought to know between good and evil, yet were he ever so cross, it was but for me to sing a hymn; or, if at meal time, to ask a blessing; or to engage in prayer, and he would be quite silent, and seemed to pay great attention, as if he knew every word I spoke, and whom I was addressing. And, added to this, he was more fond of me than of any other person, which rendered him very dear to me.

Our Lord has told us, "many that were first shall be last, and last first." These words have a different meaning, but in one sense they are fulfilled respecting me and my little boy. I was before him, but now he is before me. He now sees, knows, and enjoys more than ever I shall, (though aided by the Holy Spirit,) whilst in this imperfect state; therefore I cannot wish my little boy back in a world of sickness and sorrow, nor say to the Lord, "What doest thou?" I

rather praise him that he has made me a means of bringing one into the world who I have no doubt is an inheritor of eternal glory. I have still greater reason to praise him that I find a desire to join the happy company above, when dismissed from the burdens of the flesh. And as to bodily weakness and pain, which I have lately experienced, I can, I trust, say with David, to the glory of free grace, "It has been good that I have been afflicted." If the Lord has sent me these trials as a punishment for sin, it is much less than I deserve. Therefore, in the midst of deserved judgment he still remembers mercy. If sent to wean me from the world, and put me in mind of my latter end, I trust they have had the desired effect. I wish to adopt the apostle's words, and say, "I die daily" to sin, to the world, its profits, and pleasures; and it is my greatest distress that I am no more dead to these things.

May the Lord perfect that which is lacking in your and my soul. Nothing but Christ formed in the heart the Hope of Glory will support a soul in a day of trial. May you and I be daily renewing our acquaintance with him, and learning of him to be meek and lowly in heart, that we may find rest unto our souls! Then death, whenever sent, will be a welcome messenger. We shall meet him without dismay, and have confidence, and not be ashamed before our blessed Master at his coming.

I am your loving brother, &c.,

March 5th, 1795.

J. SYMONS.

A LETTER FROM THE LATE HENRY FOWLER.

Dear Friend,—My long silence has the appearance of forgetfulness; but my many cares and perplexities must apologise for the delay. I have been of late much in the fire and in the water; but through the good hand of God, have thus far been brought on my way.

One part of my perplexity has been a complete storm in my church, arising from the terrible news of my leaving them, so that I have had difficult work to still the tempest: so difficult is it to allay the heat of passion even in God's people, when their will is crossed. Indeed, it requires a stronger arm than mine to resist the attacks of the lion, who ever seeks an opportunity to make inroads in the flock of Christ. I proposed on my return to visit Birmingham every alternate six weeks; but my proposal was not generally acceded to. Consequently I wrote to London to say I should go there at Christmas, or rather, the first Sabbath in January, and continue with them six months on probation. But I can make allowance for my people's feelings: neither you nor myself would like to be deprived of a minister under whom we had sat with pleasure and heard our path clearly pointed out by, even though it might appear to be the will of God.

Our will seldom goes straight with God's will; hence arises a contest within. God said to Jonah, "Go to Nineveh." "No," said Jonah, "I'll go to Joppa." The fact is, with the command there must come a commanding power, or else we kick and rebel. God said to Abra-

ham, "Get thee out," and Abraham went out, because with the word went a commanding power, and then the business was done. Even so it is now. I might say, "Friend W., cast thy burden upon the Lord Jesus, who is *mighty to save*;" and my friend would say, "No, I am afraid to do that—that would be presumption." But if the power went with the word it would soon be done, and he would go on his way rejoicing, till his feet got again entangled with the brambles of Sinai. The kingdom of God stands unmoved when Jesus the King of Zion rules by power; and when his love is communicated with the same, then, and at every reviving time, we get always almighty power. "He giveth power to the faint, and unto them that have no might he increaseth strength."

Since my return I have been in great bondage both in my own soul and in my ministry, while at the same time many have been set free. You know not, my friend, how perplexing these things are to my mind, and unbelief says I shall be the same in London, and soon run my cruise dry. And yet I must preach, and now regularly preach five sermons a week. Thus I go on, amidst a variety of fears that I shall run aground.

"I wonder that a soul so vile
Should ever see the Saviour smile."

Let me hear from you soon. Ever yours in the bonds of the everlasting gospel,

HENRY FOWLER.

Birmingham, Nov. 18th, 1820.

IN ALL THINGS WE ARE INSTRUCTED.

My dear Brother,—Through the tender mercy of God, we reached home about half-past six, and I verily believe if Mr. F. and J. H. had not pushed behind the vehicle with all their might and strength, we should not have reached the top of D. hill; as it was, we were half an hour in getting up, with only Mrs. L. riding.

In all things we are instructed. This poor thing of a horse being so weak and enfeebled through age and infirmity, would not travel the ground, either with good treatment or bad; no whip could move him on, nor would tugging the bridle. He seemed proof against all. And the fact of the matter was this, the journey was too long, and the load too heavy. This put me in mind of the many half-hearted professors of the day, who are no better than worldlings, and who, by reason of the fall of man, the nature of sin, and their long continuance in it, the weakness and infirmity of the flesh, the love they have of sin and of their own evil ways, will not, nor can they be persuaded by all the argument of mortals to forsake their sins, leave the broad road that leads to everlasting destruction, and walk in that new and consecrated way to heaven, even through the rent veil of a dear Redeemer's flesh. No whip can move them, no thunderings from Mount Sinai, no threatenings either from law or justice, no kind entreaties, no admonitions whatever. No! nothing short of an

almighty power put forth on their behalf can possibly turn them from evil to good; from the powers of darkness, and translate them into the kingdom of God's dear Son. They love sin, and the wages of sin are and must be death eternal, both to soul and body.

But let us look a little at the mere nominal professors of the day. *They* think the journey too long, too tedious, too irksome to flesh and blood, the road too rough, and attended with so many difficulties and dangers, that they would rather you should go alone. The sermons are too long for them; they get wearied out; they want it over, and think and say one half the length would have been much more profitable, and pleased them better; whereas the fact is, they have no appetite for the bread of heaven, no longing desires after Jesus, no sincere breathings of soul for a clear and perfect knowledge of Him, whom to know is eternal life. While, on the other hand, the children of the most high God, who are feeling after the power in which the kingdom stands, and longing for a manifestation of God's love and mercy, revealed to, and made known, and sweetly and powerfully applied home to their hearts by the Spirit of truth, think it not too long, but could sit an hour longer.

My dear brother, grace, rich grace, distinguishing grace alone has made us to differ; and the God of all grace in a Trinity of Persons shall have all the praise and glory of our salvation, who alone is worthy. And sure I am you can, and heartily too, say, "Amen, Lord Jesus, so be it." Then, as sure as God has made you thus willing in the day of his almighty power, brought you sensibly to see and feel your need of him, stripped you of everything of your own in point of justification, given you an appetite for Christ, the substance of all, a love to his people, his servants, and ways, and you have received him and them in your heart, Jesus will speak a word of sweet encouragement himself to you, and to all such, namely, "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall (positively) receive a prophet's reward," &c.; and what is that? "Abraham, I am thy shield, and thine exceeding great reward."

Mrs. L. and S— unite with me in Christian love to one and all, and thank you for all your kindness.

Yours in gospel love,

JAMES LEWIS.

Chichester, 26th August, 1845.

[The writer of the above letter, now passed into a happy eternity, was well known to, and much respected by, the friends at Chichester and the neighbourhood; and, as a packet of his letters has been sent to the "Standard," others may, God willing, be occasionally inserted.]

If we have any right view and knowledge of ourselves, we shall know that we are now cursed in want of all things; that we are nothing but sin, and have nothing but sin, and can do nothing but sin, and deserve nothing but hell. As creatures, we are originally nothing; as worthless creatures, we are less than nothing; and as wicked creatures, we are worse than nothing.—*Ralph Erskine.*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

Dear Sir,—I beg to inform you, that the poetry inserted in the "Gospel Standard" for December, 1849, was not written by Mrs. Boorne; it was given to her some years ago by a friend in Berkshire, who knew the old lady that composed it. One night, this old lady dreamt she was entering heaven, and upon awaking penned those lines, expressive of her feelings as she entered heaven in her dream. The late Mrs. Boorne liked the account her friend gave of the old lady, and considered her to have been a partaker of grace. The lines were given to the late Mr. M'Kenzie, by the late Mr. Boorne. Mrs. Boorne's former name was Gale; no doubt you remember the piece, "E. Gale's Experience."

Yours sincerely,

JAMES BOORNE.

Wallington, Carshalton, Surrey, December 6, 1849.

P. S.—The name you intended was not Boone, but Boorne.

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

In all worldly joys there is a secret wound. (Prov. xiv. 10.)—*Owen*.

Having gotten Christ, it is not possible to keep him peaceably, except the devil were dead. (1 Pet. v. 7, 8, 9.)—*Rutherford*.

He that lives in sin and expects happiness hereafter, is like him that soweth cockle and thinks to fill his barn with wheat or barley. (Luke vi. 44; Gal. vi. 7, 8.)—*Bunyan*.

Christ maintains a little grace in his children amidst many strong corruptions and lusts: grace is but a little grain, and yet it lives and thrives; it is an abiding seed, under continual influences from Christ. (John iii. 5; John xiv. 19.)—*Cole*.

Here is ground of faith and hope to sinners, that all things are given into such an able hand, who is the power of God as well as the wisdom of God; able to keep things that the Father commits to him, and able to keep all things that believers commit to him; able to save to the uttermost, able to help at the last extremity, able to give out all things needful for our various circumstances, and able to do far above all that we can ask or think.—*Ralph Erskine*.

Now, I have found by experience, that when my judgment went into these things, and my heart has not felt them, they have rather made me giddy; they have brought me into some giddy step or another. My brethren, brain religion will not do, and I sometimes tell my people, that brain religion breeds a brain fever; but God brings us down a step, and so we are brought to a proper feeling before a heart-searching God. Don't you be satisfied with the knowledge of truth in the judgment; if any one wants to persuade you so, hold such a one as a vagabond, as a man who wants to deceive you.—*Gadsby*.

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 a 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. 10.

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THE EXPERIENCE OF J. CENNICK.

Perhaps it may not be unuseful for some of those who may read the following verses, to know the manner in which God has dealt with the soul of him who wrote them. A short account thereof is, therefore, subjoined. O that many might even hence learn, that God "is very nigh unto all that call upon him," and that he hath never failed them that seek him.

From my infancy I was brought up in the Church of England, and carefully instructed by my mother in the principles of religion; and till twelve years old, I lived as most children used to do, being fond of play, but afraid to swear or take God's name in vain; yet my temper was obstinate, and my lips full of lies continually. Nor could any one be more furious when provoked; but after my passion was over, I commonly dreaded to go to bed, lest I should drop into hell before morning. Nor did I dare to sleep till I had said my prayers, and promised how good I would be the next day. And this was also my way of buying pardon from God, when I had sinned in any gross way: as by lying, sabbath-breaking, stealing from my school-fellows, disobedience to my parents; being often mindful of those words, "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it."

As I was taught, so I kept constant to daily prayers at St. Lawrence's church, in Reading, (the town of my nativity,) till I was about thirteen. I went to London, with an intent to be there apprenticed to some trade; but being disappointed, I returned with my mother,

and soon after hearing of another place, I went again eight times, but still without effect; being never permitted by divine Providence to agree with any, though my will then was much to be in the world, promising myself great peace and many enjoyments when I should come to be my own master. I was, at last, on trial with a carpenter; but when the time was come that I should be bound, some objections were made by my master, who thought me too young, and chose to stay till the other apprentices were out of their time. Thus was I unsettled again, God having provided some better thing for me.

When I came to be near fifteen, I began to be very uneasy for want of employment, and strove to find out a business in which I might work at home, and ease myself of so many fruitless journeys. I began to learn two or three trades, and longed to get money, that I might have wherewith to give to the poor, and do as I pleased. I thought how religious, and thankful, and charitable I would then be; yea, and was so persuaded I should be rich, that I made a promise, and wrote it down, to build a chapel and erect a more strict order in the church, wherein people should fast duly according to the Rubric, and sit up all night in prayer, and go plain in apparel. But when I had learned the art of buying and selling, and laid out much money, my heart failed so, that I could not consent to set up a public shop, though my mother had built one for me. No one can imagine the fear that came upon me, when I thought of it. I thought, if none should buy of me I should be starved, or obliged to run away by night, and perish in solitude. Thus restrained, I worked privately, and contented myself with getting just enough for food and raiment, and yet keeping more and more to duties at church and in the closet. I said in my heart, Here I shall be happy.

From about fifteen I took delight to see and read plays, and to look into histories and romances. And surely, had it been in my power, plays would have had all my time, and I had forgot Jesus and everlasting things. But being prevented for want of money, I delighted myself in reading them, in singing songs, talking of the heathen gods, of the wars of the Jews and Greeks, of Alexander the Great, and in the cursed delusion of card playing, in seeing sights, in horse races, in dancing assemblies, revelling and walking with young company. Thus loving ungodliness more than goodness, and to talk of lies more than righteousness.

After this way I spent my life till Easter (I believe) 1735, when, as I was walking hastily in Cheapside in London, the hand of the Lord touched me. I felt at once an uncommon fear and dejection, and though all my days, since I could remember, had been bitter through the strength of convictions and the fear of going to hell, yet I knew not any weight before like this. At first I thought it might be owing to my missing the Lord's supper on Easter-day; which I had done, because I had not opportunity to fast in the Passion Week as I would, (being at my brother's house, where I thought I should be laughed at for it,) and I did not dare to communicate unprepared, and without the wedding garment.

I continued dull and thoughtful all the time I was in town, nor

would sights and songs divert my trouble. I then thought the thick and unhealthy air might make me out of order, and by going into the country I should be well; but such a journey did I never take before. No sooner had I left the city than the terrors of the Lord came about me, and the pairs of hell took hold on me. Though the sun shone beautifully, and the day was pleasant, it brought no comfort to me. I went to my house heavy and disconsolate, and would have prayed, but could not. My grief was too great, and increased night and day exceedingly. I grew feeble, and was sore smitten, and roared for the very disquietness of my heart.

I went on thus near a year, hoping to get the victory over it, though utterly ignorant what my distemper was; often looking back to my innocent life, and wondered why God had singled out me to make miserable. And when I found freedom to pray, I begged the Lord to give me a friend who would join with me in religion, that in his company I might drive away my grief, and go on my way rejoicing. Not long after, I contracted an acquaintance with one who was serious, and in a short time with another, whom I soon loved better than the first: not for the regard he had to religion, but for his natural sweet disposition and merry behaviour.

And now we were so pleased with each other's company, that we were never so well as when we were met together, especially when the other went to Oxford; and I was generally eased from my convictions all the while we were together; for so greatly did it displease the Lord, that he then withdrew his hand, and for a while let me alone.

But it was not long before the weight returned, and whenever I was walking alone, either in the fields or roads, every thing appeared so strange and wild, that I often resolved not to look up, and wished to fly to some solitary place, where I might dwell in a cave, lying on the leaves of trees, and feeding on the natural fruits of the earth. Whomsoever I met, I envied their happiness; whatever I heard grieved me; and whatever I said or did so troubled me, that I repented that I stirred or broke silence. If I laughed at anything, my heart smote me immediately; and if the occasion was a foolish jest or lie, I thought, "Alas! I help to ruin not only my own soul, but the souls of others also;" and such places of Scripture would come in my mind, "Woe be to them that laugh now, for they shall mourn and weep;" and, "Without are dogs, and whoso loveth and maketh a lie;" and, "That they all may be damned who take pleasure in unrighteousness."

I left off singing songs, playing at cards, seeing plays, and such like; finding plainly they were "vanity of vanities. And indeed, when I looked into the world, all things seemed to be unnatural and unpleasant, as if I had been banished into a foreign land; my own town, house, and relations being all strange to me. Then I wished strongly to get into a Romish monastery, and to spend my life in holy retirement; but the want of money for my journey seemed to prevent me from doing it.

Often such a confusion of thought came upon me in bed, that I was forced to rise and walk about the chamber. If I were up, I

endeavoured to overcome it by running, or eating, or talking; and when all these failed, I thought physic might do me good. And then I took physic: but alas! the true Physician I knew not. When between times I was somewhat easier, I began to cry peace to my soul. "I have not been so very great a sinner as such a one; soul, be of good cheer." But my pangs soon returned, and the more I tried to quiet my accusing conscience, the more it testified against me; and my sorrows were so multiplied, that I was even buried in affliction.

All this while I had no power over sin, nor the least strength to resist temptation, being carnal and sold under sin. I committed it continually, though not in the eyes of the world. My chief sins were pride, murmuring against God, blasphemy, disobedience, and evil concupiscence: sometimes I strove against them, but finding myself always conquered, I concluded there was no help. Then was I weary of life, and often prayed that God would hide me in the grave; or, at least, suffer me to be mad, that I might not be sensible of my many misfortunes. Sometimes a spark of fear and hope, and hell and heaven, would so confusedly come into my mind, that I could scarcely forbear blaspheming aloud; and if I strove to pray, such horrid sentences against God came into my mind, that instead of opening my mouth I was fixing my teeth together, lest I should utter them. Then the tempter so powerfully suggested that God looked to the heart and not to the words, that I more and more thought I was predestinated to misery everlasting. Often, too, as I was walking, I found such strong temptations to curse and swear, that I have stood considering whether I have not really spoken; and I have expected every moment to have the devil let loose upon me, and to fall into all manner of wickedness.

When I was at church, I was generally thinking how I should in time be rich; and what a stately church I would build, how the pillars should stand, and how the altar be adorned with paintings; in what form the communion table should be placed, and how the windows should be painted; but when the last prayer was reading my terrors would return. My formal worship seemed a plain mockery of God. I made promises to be more watchful, and because my mind should not wander, I fixed my eyes on the devoutest of the congregation; but there, also, I found them to wander as before, and to envy them for being more devout than myself.

Finding so much dissatisfaction in all I did, not knowing sin from duty or convictions from temptations, and considering "the prayers of the wicked are an abomination," I at last left off to pray. Scarcely had I done this, but the devil persuaded me to say in my heart, "'There is no God!' Who is God? No one ever saw him; how can I tell if there be a God or not? If there were, he would not have suffered me to endure so much, knowing how religiously I have lived from my youth." Thus I reasoned with myself till I sank deeper and deeper; yet whenever I read the Scripture, my heart so witnessed to the truth, that I could not help saying, "Doubtless there is a God that judgeth in the earth."

The night was more burdensome than the day. I started at every thing that stirred in the dark, fancying I should see apparitions in the corners of the rooms, or behind me, or in my way; being continually afraid of meeting the devil. Then it came strongly to me. If there be no God, why am I pressed to curse him? On which I began to pray again, yet almost in despair, for the evil I had done. Finding his face was still against me and his truth ready to swallow me up, I often despondingly said, "O why am I thy mark? Have I sinned more than all the sons of Adam? O that I had never been born, or died on the knees, when I hanged yet on my mother's breast." The more I was assured of a Divine Ruler, by his repeated scourges and the want of him in my heart, the more Satan pressed me to believe myself quite forsaken; and when I looked up toward heaven I said, "Ah! I have no part there. The gate of that holy city is closed to every sinner; and no impure thing can enter therein. Alas! what shall I do in the day of judgment? How shall I meet the Lord, when he shall come with ten thousand of his saints and in flaming fire; but is there no pity with God? Must I be cast away from his eyes? Has the Lord forgotten to be gracious?" When no answer was given, again I ceased, and thought to bear my burden and look no more to be released; saying to myself, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." And meanwhile, such clouds covered me that I stood still, and fixed my heavy eyes on the trees, walls, or on the ground, amazed above measure, and often crying with a bitter cry, "What must I do to be saved?"

Among the many idle contrivances I had of escaping, one was to travel by night to Salisbury Plain; and there sit, or wander about without food, till I should be eased of my tedious life. Having fixed on midnight for my first setting out, I bade adieu to the world. As I was eating a bit of bread, (being alone,) I spoke thus: "I will now eat no more for ever. I shall now trouble the earth no more; I shall no more see any of my acquaintance or relations till I meet them in eternity." I then laid me down as I was, that I might be ready at the time; but God's providence so ordered, that I awoke not till late in the morning, and so was again disappointed.

Throughout all my calamity, I could not be thankful for any temporal blessing. Nothing delighted me, or made me once wish to stay behind on the earth a day. The shining of the sun, the beauty of the spring, the voice of singing, the melody of birds, the shade of trees, or the murmur of waters, afforded me now no pleasure. No, all was strange, and dark, and gloomy, and desolate. All was vanity and vexation of spirit. All the earth seemed full of darkness and cruel habitations; nor could meat, drink, or raiment give me any comfort. I wanted only to know if I had any part in the Lord Jesus.

And now a thought sometimes came, What if I should be saved? The words also came, "Behold thou shalt bear my name before much people; and it shall come to pass that in thy days many shall be added to the Lord." To this I myself answered, "Lord, how can I bear thy name to others, who look every hour to be lost myself?"

Neither have I learning, or the understanding of the Scriptures. Then would it be strongly impressed upon me, "Fear not, I am with thee, and thou shalt testify of me in every place whither I shall send thee. Lo, I will be a mouth to thee, and thou shalt bear my gospel, even in the midst of the streets." But this being then an unheard-of thing, I regarded it not, and was soon as heavy as before.

After I had been thus afflicted and grieved nearly two years, the temptation to think I should never die, or live to a great age, so prevailed upon me, that instead of asking for mercy, I asked hourly for death; yea, and desired to break into eternity, though at the hazard of falling into hell. My continual prayer was out of Herm. Hugo.

" O Lord, my God, some kind relief afford,
Grant some kind poison, or some friendly sword;
The mercy, death, is all I thee implore,
O grant it soon, lest I blaspheme thy power."

These thoughts I often cherished by rising at midnight, and looking out at the window, contemplating the solemnity of the night, and the profound silence of the morning watch. If, then, I heard a dog bark, trembling, I answered, "So God accounts of my prayers;" if I heard the owl, I thought, "I am also become like an owl in the desert."

As I was yet pressed down with convictions of sin, and the fear of God's wrath, and the dreadful looking-for-of judgment; pride in apparel and spirit, lust, covetousness, and passion still ruled most in my captive spirit. Against these I strove by fasting long and often, and prayed kneeling nine times a day; and the week before the communion I spent as much time as possible in works of mortification and self-denial, eating only once a day, viz., in the evening; and from Friday breakfast I ate not till Sunday noon, when I received the bread and wine. But when I had done all which it was in my power to do, and found no relief, I was convinced salvation was not of works. No alms, or fastings, or prayers, or watchings, could cover my naked soul from almighty wrath. I hated my righteousness, loathed my prayers, and could truly say, I am unprofitable, and my righteousness as filthy rags. Yea, and amidst all my works, such terror came upon me as made me sweat and quake exceedingly.

Yet in all I suffered, I dreaded turning back into the world more than my present affliction, nay, more than the thoughts of hell; and was bent to go forward, and perish at the feet of Jesus. Accordingly, for his sake, I now resolved to part with the only friend I had; having heard him openly blaspheme. I therefore wholly refrained from his company, and in a few days we became strangers to each other. This proved a great trial; but though I was often tempted thereto, I durst never heal the breach or renew my friendship.

When we had wholly parted, and I had thrown off all thoughts of being free again, the storm so long gathering fell upon me; the arrows of the Almighty so pierced my heart, that I could not tell if I should be out of hell a moment. All the sins that ever I had done were set before me; all my secret acts of uncleanness, my theft, lies, and evil words stared me in the face, and cried continually,

"'Thou art the man.' Thou art the soul that hast rejected God, and lo, his wrath abideth upon thee." O the torment I then endured; I hated every body I saw, but especially those of my own house. I was disobedient, and without natural affection. I said, "Surely I am reprobate; God hath loved every man but me."

To this were added trials of all kinds. My employment was to measure land with a gentleman of Reading; and in the harvest, and other times of leisure, I bought things of several sorts, and sold them again retail. But now altogether my business failed, my friends looked cold, and enemies increased. If any one spoke to me, it was like a sword cutting my heart; especially if they spoke sharply, all my hope, even in the present life, was taken away. I thought I must starve with hunger here, and be tormented for ever hereafter. Judge, ye that read, what I passed through. My own house behaved as though they knew me not, and all my acquaintances condemned me; so that I even wished I had never inquired after God or heard of the salvation of Jesus.

I envied now more than ever those who were fallen asleep in death; these, I thought, are now at rest. They know sorrow no more, their tears are wiped away, all their travail is at an end. If there were infants or children where I was, I pitied their fate, being born into such a world; and rejoiced when I heard they were dead. Yea, when I beheld the state of insects, birds, beasts, &c., I wished I were half as happy as they, who, after a short life, remain in silence.

Quite forlorn and destitute, finding prayers, and tears, and cries in vain, about the beginning of August, 1737, I began to resign myself, in the midst of my distress, to the wise disposal of God. I gave up my desires, my will, and my remains of hope; being content to go down to hell (as God should please) either in life or death.

I waited many hours silently upon God, and if I broke silence, cried unto Jesus, to remember his blood, and tears, and sufferings; and if there was room for me in his favour, to reveal it to me. I no more said, Lord, remember how innocently I have lived; nor thanked him because I was better than another; but pleaded the great oblation and sacrifice of Christ crucified, and entreated mercy for his sake alone. I knew my guilt, and was dumb before my God; often repeating those words of Eli, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good."

I was still bent on going into some solitary place, that I might there find the happiness of waiting on God. Though I had often before been hindered, I resolved to try once more, and fixed for it the 7th day of September, 1737. I paid every one to whom I owed any thing, intending to take a Bible and Common Prayer Book, with Hugo's "Emblems;" and prayed my journey might be prosperous. As I lay awake on the sixth day, a strange heaviness came upon me, and when I arose it continued. My mind was full of fear and trouble, and I was, I think, more dejected than ever; I purposed, notwithstanding, to be gone before the next sun-rising. While I was sitting, and reflecting thereon, the Saints' bell rang at St. Lawrence's church for prayers. At first I was careless about going, but after considering

what the people would say, and what they would think if I missed church when in town; and that it might stagger some, fearing I was negligent or gone back; I concluded in my own breast to go. And when I was risen up, I again thought, "I shall be far enough off about this time to-morrow, and I may as well forbear to go now; it is but for once, and there is no good there for me. I may as well keep my place, and be content." I sat down, but was so uneasy that I was obliged to get up and go. I went out like some outcast into a foreign land; my heart was ready to burst, my soul at the brink of hell, above measure disconsolate and heavy. Had any met me, my countenance would have betrayed me, as well as my low voice and tears. When I had entered the church, and fallen on my knees, I began murmuring (as I did often) because my cross seemed more heavy than ever was laid on any one beside; and how untroubled all the children of God passed to heaven, and how full of terror I must go down to hell. And I was as if the sword of the Lord was dividing asunder my joints and marrow, my soul and spirit, till near the end of the Psalms, when these words were read: "Great are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all;" and, "He that putteth his trust in God shall not be destitute." I had just reason to think, Who can be more destitute than I? when I was overwhelmed with joy. I believed there was mercy. My heart danced for joy, and my dying soul revived. I heard the voice of Jesus saying, "I am thy salvation." I no more groaned under the weight of sin; the fear of hell was taken away; and being sensible that Christ loved me and died for me, I rejoiced in God my Saviour.

This joy and peace in believing filled me about three or four hours; and I began to vow everlasting obedience, and how faithfully I would stand for the Lord all the days of my life. "In this my prosperity, I said, I shall never be moved; thou, Lord, hast made my hill so strong." But it was not long before he hid his face, and I was troubled. Satan was suffered to buffet me violently, and to suggest, "Where is now thy God? How do I know but this is delusion? May it not be that the Lord has shown me this as an aggravation to my torment, when I am cast away." My horrors were so great, that I sweated, prayed, and cried aloud for mercy. And when I saw no help, I drank the cup which my Father had given me; and I said, (submitting myself to his righteous will,) "If the Lord is pleased to cast me off, I am content. I would willingly sit down with the saints in the kingdom; but the Lord's will be done."

About three days after, I was sitting thoughtful in an inner room, and in the multitude of my temptations, I imagined that the dull weather might add to my grief. Scarcely had I thus thought, ere the sun (which had not shone for some time) shone beautifully through the clouds, and the voice of God witnessed at that instant, "Thus shall the Sun of Righteousness arise on thee." I believed the promise, and found the love of God again shed abroad in my heart. I saw clearly the will of the Lord, in calling me through much tribulation; and I said gladly, "It is good for me that I have been in trouble."

I felt great and settled peace daily from this time; and whenever I found temptations I prayed, and knew always that Scripture true, "God will hear them speedily who cry day and night unto him." When I laid me down in bed, I lay as in the Everlasting Arms; and when I rose in the morning, the Lord was present, and often my lips have been uttering words of prayer before I well knew whether I was sleeping or waking. Clouds, indeed, often passed over my mind; yet at times I had so clear communion with Jesus, that I have spent the day, and forgotten how the time passed away; and could no more doubt of his presence in my heart than of the shining of the sun when I beheld him in his strength, God bearing witness often with the promises of the gospel, saying, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love;" and, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." I rested not in the full participation of Jesus' love, but as a cordial was it given to my soul when I was weary, and cried for rest in my pilgrimage; or, after the tempter was departed from me: or, in the trials which I had from my own family: but all the dissatisfaction, or coldness which came from them, only served to wean me more and more from the world and the things of the world. O that I may never love father, or mother, or house, or land, more than thee.

(To be concluded in our next.)

SORROW AND COMFORT; OR, CONFLICTS AND TRIUMPHS THE COMMON LOT OF ALL REAL BELIEVERS.

BY JOHN RUSK.

"The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy."—PROV. xiv. 10.

Although God's dear family, when called by grace, find the truth of what our Lord says, "In the world ye shall have tribulation," yet it is not all tribulation. No; and although he also told his disciples that he would send them a Comforter that should abide with them for ever, yet it is not all comfort. No; it is a chequered life, and we are the subjects of many, yea, of very many changes in passing through this wilderness world below to the heavenly Canaan above.

The Proverbs of Solomon are very deep. He was the wisest of men, for God blessed him with such wisdom as none else ever had, and therefore you read that they are "the words of the wise and their dark sayings;" and I am sure that nothing short of God the eternal Spirit, who influenced him to write them, can give us the true meaning of what is written. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God;" and this is a part of holy writ. Some foolish people think that these proverbs are only fit for children to read; but this shows their great ignorance, for it can be proved that every doctrine essential unto salvation is to be found in the book of Proverbs.

Now, as our text has no connexion with what goes before, so it has no dependence upon what follows after, but is a detached sentence. I will come, then, at once to the words of the text, and,

I. Show *the various causes of this bitterness*, and that it all enters the heart; and what we are here to understand by the heart: "The heart knoweth his own bitterness."

II. We will show *the various causes of all real joy*, and what this joy springs from, in opposition to a false joy.

III. What is intended here by *a stranger*, and that this stranger intermeddleth not with this joy. And then

IV. Close the subject with a word of *advice*.

I. I am to show *the various causes of this bitterness*; and that it all enters the heart, and what we are here to understand by the heart. Here we must begin where God begins; therefore the bitterness began in the garden of Eden, where our first parents ate the forbidden fruit, and we partook of the dreadful consequence of it. Adam and Eve fell, and we in them, for by one man's sin "judgment came upon all men to condemnation;" and therefore sin is the cause of bitterness, and "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." The whole human race is only Adam and Eve as it were in pieces. Now, here we all are in a dreadful plight, yet none know it properly but God's elect, under the quickening operations of the Holy Ghost; he makes known what sin is, and what it has exposed us to, and a dreadful discovery we have. This will be a plague and a pest to us ever after until death; because, although God does pardon the guilt of sin and destroy its reigning power, yet the in-being of the enemy we shall ever find until death. Our whorish hearts ever will be running after mischief, which will procure the chastening hand of God. O the innumerable idols which we are continually setting up, so very bent are we to backslide from our God! We observe lying vanities and forsake our own mercies, "forsake the fountain of living waters and hew out to ourselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." We are often joined to these idols, as Ephraim was. Ah! reader, the many painful seasons I have had, owing to the corrupt nature that I carry about, always craving for those things that in the end bring bitterness of soul!

If you read carefully the first five chapters in Jeremiah, and also Ezekiel xvi., you will see plenty of this departing from the Lord. Sins against light and love are very aggravating, and the cause of great bitterness. The law in the members is a love to sin, and, under the influence of the old man, we indulge it; such a power has Satan (by permission) over God's children. But they are afterwards brought to books, and made to smart for their folly; and God will make them sick in smiting them. "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backsliding shall reprove thee; know, therefore, and see, that it is an evil thing and bitter that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, (in exercise,) saith the Lord God of hosts." (Jer. i. 19.) "Thy ways and thy doings have procured these things unto thee; this is thy wickedness, because it is bitter, because it reacheth to thine heart." (iv. 18.)

Now, God ever will visit our sin with a rod, and this causeth bitter lamentation, as it is written: "O daughter of my people, gird thee with sackcloth, and wallow thyself in ashes; make thee mourning as for an only son, most bitter lamentation; for the spoiler shall suddenly come upon us." (Jer. vi. 26.) Ah! whatever calamity may come upon a country, our backslidings from God (his own family I mean) have a great hand in it. Thus sin in all its bearings, whether under our first convictions, or afterwards in our backslidings, secretly or openly, is a grievous and bitter thing. This will take in all I shall say, only I will branch it out.

2. *God is pleased deeply to instruct some of his people out of his law.* All have a measure of this teaching, yet not all alike deep—and this is for wise ends and purposes, to pull down pride and to lay us in the dust. Not that this abstractedly will do it, but God's management of this chastisement. Here we learn how opposite we are in every thing to God; we learn our proper distance, and tremble before him; yes, and separate ourselves from both professors and profane that despise this teaching.

Hence God instructed the prophet Isaiah with a strong hand, that he might not walk in the way of such people.

Jeremiah had a very deep work of this sort: "I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath." And Paul tells us that the law worketh wrath. The anger of God is revealed in a broken law, and this is keenly felt. Read the Lamentations, and particularly the 3rd chap. "He is brought into darkness," and Mount Sinai burneth with blackness and darkness. God is turned against him, for he never is well pleased with any in the law; he made his flesh and skin old, and broke his bones; he builded against him, compassed him with gall and travail, hedged him about; he made his chain heavy, and his sin a burden; and "by the law is the knowledge of sin;" he shut out his prayer, for there is no access to God in the law; and he appears under this teaching to reject all our petitions. "He hath made my paths crooked," *i. e.*, he hath discovered to me the crookedness of my paths. "He was unto me as a bear lying in wait, and as a lion in secret places, turned aside his way." "He pulled him in pieces and made him desolate." By all this we are to understand a discovery of what is wrong. "He hath bent his bow;" that is, cutting reproof from the word; "and set me as a mark for the arrow; he hath filled me with bitterness." O what bitterness is felt under this teaching! "He hath made me drunk with wormwood," which is a very bitter thing. Thus he speaks of "gall and wormwood," in order to set forth the bitterness of the afflictions he underwent.

But Job also travelled this path; for although Job had been so very highly favoured, yet he is to know the dark side as well as the bright; he is to know the severity of God in a broken law as well as his goodness in Christ Jesus; and thus sing of judgment as well as mercy—judgment past and mercy to come. Observe, then, that this bitterness also came from a broken law. Hence he says, "Thou

writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth." It is the moral law which, as Paul says, is against us all, and contrary to us, because it calls for love, and we are enmity itself. And writing them against Job was making him to see and feel his condemned state. (xiii. 26.) "Even to-day is my complaint bitter; my stroke is heavier than my groaning." (xxiii. 2.) "He will not suffer me to take my breath, but hath filled me with bitterness." (ix. 18.) "My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul." (x. 1.) These scriptures show us what bitterness of soul is felt when the law enters, and sin revives: "Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life to the bitter in soul?" (Job iii. 20.) Thus "the heart knoweth his own bitterness," which arises from a discovery of our sin, and the sentence of a broken law.

3. Another cause of this bitterness arises from *the cruel treatment and oppression of men*; and God's children generally have a good deal of this. Hence you read in the prophet Isaiah what our Lord says, "My people went down aforetime into Egypt, to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. Now, therefore, what have I here, saith the Lord, that my people is taken away for nought? They that rule over them make them to howl, and my name continually every day (by these Assyrians) is blasphemed." (lii. 4, 5.) You see how cruelly God's people have always been treated by the world. We have it in many parts of the Scriptures, but I shall only mention two more.

The next is what James speaks: "Go to now, ye rich men; weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten, &c.; behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth and been wanton." And then he encourages the Lord's people under it all: "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." (Jas. v.) However long such oppressors may go on, yet it is only to their own destruction.

Solomon takes notice of these oppressors, as you read: "So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power."

I am sure there is plenty of it in this country in which we live; for almost universally every one is for taking an advantage. "If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, (as we do see,) marvel not at the matter." (Prov. iv. 1; v. 8.) And is there any promise in God's word to show that God will put all this oppression down altogether? Yes, there really is; and you will find it in Psalm lxxii., which psalm never can properly be applied to Solomon, but to our Lord Jesus Christ. By reading you will see this; and it is speaking of those glorious days when the Lord Jesus Christ shall take to himself his

great power, and reign from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. And then it says: "He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor." (Verse 4.) So, you see, however long the oppressors may triumph, yet God's judgments will overtake them.

Now, "oppression" takes in cruel treatment of our characters, circumstances, families, bodies, and lives; all this is included in "oppression," and it causes us much bitterness. How cruelly did Pharaoh and the task masters rule over God's Israel, causing them to make bricks without straw! This, too, went on for a length of time. They groaned to the Lord, but the promise was delayed for a time. Yet God had a time, and he brought them out on the very day which he had appointed. Now, it is said, "They made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field; all their service wherein they made them serve was with rigour." (Exodus i. 14.) "The heart knoweth his own bitterness." But again:

4. Another cause of this bitterness of heart is this: *God causing rivals to be in the way*; and he will for some time appear to favour those that are hypocrites and enemies to him, and appear to go against his own people. Now, this has often been the case, and no small trial it is, and causes much bitterness; and this you may clearly see in Hannah, who was of a sorrowful spirit. Peninnah was a rival to her, and caused her to fret, always reproaching her with her barrenness. But she was very fruitful herself, and nothing of sorrow and bitterness did Peninnah feel. O no; she was not in the path of tribulation. Now, it is said of Hannah, that "she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord and wept sore." (1 Sam. i. 10.) Those are always the best prayers, when we cannot speak; and this I say to cut off mere talkers in religion, who are well furnished with their tongues, but have no heart work. Such are never at a loss. However, God heard poor Hannah, and answered her prayer by giving her Samuel, whom she devoted to the Lord, and who was a very bright character. Whether Hannah had ever procured to herself all this, is not for us to determine, as the Scriptures are silent; but we know that God does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.

Job appears to have had some of these rivals also; hence he says, "My soul is weary of my life, I will leave my complaint upon myself: I will speak in the bitterness of my soul." "Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?" (x. 1. 3.) How hardly his three friends bore upon him, cutting and condemning him as a hypocrite! and yet this went on, and it appeared as though God was for them, and against Job.

Solomon, the beloved of the Lord, was well acquainted with this path, (but he procured it all unto himself;) and therefore, when his heart was turned from the Lord after the outlandish women, God raised up Jeroboam to be a rival to him, and took ten tribes from

him. O what a trial this was to Solomon, so that he sought to slay him! "The heart knoweth his own bitterness."

5. Another cause of this bitterness is this: *it arises from a distrust of God's providence*, a taking thought for to-morrow. By this we do not understand the next day, for we often find it very prudent and becoming to take thought for the next day. But it means, a long time to come, that never may come at all; for we may be removed by death; such as this: "I am supplied now, but I am very weak; my strength fails fast; how shall I do when I get old? and what will become of my family?" An instance of this appears in Naomi. We have no account that she left Bethlehem-Judah and went to Moab at God's command. This was not as David says, "Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." Naomi dwelt in the land of Moab about ten years; but God's hand went out against her, and she lost her husband and her two sons for her unbelief. After this, hearing that there was plenty in Judah, she and her two daughters-in-law arose to come back again; but Orpah turned back, not being right in heart; while Ruth was stedfast. And when they came back, Naomi's friends were glad, and said, "Here is Naomi." And now comes an honest confession of her unbelief and her distrust of God's providence: "And she said, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara, for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me." Well, Naomi, but you know that there was no famine in Moab, and therefore, why stay in Judah and starve? "Yes, but, I did not wait for the Lord, to see whether he would appear or not; I went out full, but have gained nothing by my journey; for the Lord hath brought me home again empty. Why, then, call ye me Naomi, or pleasantness? Call me Mara, or bitterness, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me." (Ruth i. 20, 21.) And thus "the heart knoweth his own bitterness."

(To be continued.)

THEY CALLED UPON THE LORD, AND HE ANSWERED THEM.

Myrevered Brother in the Lord Jesus,—Grace, mercy, and peace be with you! I trust that you will pardon me if I seem presumptuous in writing to you without being desired, but your kindness to me whilst in B—, and the singular effect of your advice, and the prayer which you were led to prefer for me, have lain upon my mind at various times as requiring some acknowledgment at my hands; and much earlier should I have performed so pleasing a duty but for lets and hindrances of labour or affliction. But better late than never. I cannot endure the thought of robbing God of his glory, nor a fellow partaker of Christ of the happiness of knowing that he has been an instrument of such essential service, through the divine favour.

You will doubtless remember our last interview, and the painful

anxiety under which I then laboured, but you do not know the power with which our heavenly Father clothed your advice to me; nor the abundant consolation which your kind prayer for me afforded. Prior to your visit I had anxiously besought the Lord for direction in the path I thought I soon must walk in. Distressed by alternate hopes and fears, and fearing to depend on my fellow man, I prayed for a special decision of my case; and who would have thought it, that you should come from such a distance with the answer to that prayer? Truly, God's ways are not our ways; nor his thoughts our thoughts. To me it is not a little surprising that I was so very free as to tell you all that was passing in my mind; but so the Lord willed it. And further, your remarks upon the subject were so powerfully applied that I received them as an answer in full from God; and from that day all desire of wandering to a distant land has left me.

Your kind prayer, too, so suited to my tried circumstances, has been as a balm many times since to my troubled spirit; for surely the Lord indited that prayer in your heart, so truly did it answer to all my necessities; and, like Elijah, I went in the strength of that meat many days. And though my trials continue without abatement, still God heard and answered your prayer for me at that time, by putting it into the heart of a Christian friend to assist me in the sharp trial under which I laboured; for which favour I desire to bless and praise his holy name, and I feel it would be wrong not to tell you of it, that you may join with me in so sweet an employ.

But whilst I look back on past favours, and vividly remember all the way the Lord has led me in the wilderness, how is it that I shake and tremble under present distress? I have had proofs multiplied a thousand fold of delivering mercy, yet when the cloud gathers I am amazed and troubled in spirit. I know that the Lord's arm is not shortened, nor his ear heavy. Yet I tremble and am astonished, so that at times I feel as though I had learned nothing in the long course of tribulation to which I have been subjected. At other times I feel glad that I have been afflicted; for it is only in such trials that the great and unchangeable love of Jehovah can be truly learned. But I, alas! am a dull scholar in the school of Christ. I need line upon line, and that continually. The world wonders at one's trials; and even Christians seem to stand in doubt as to the wherefore. My spirit faints under the load, and I can only groan out, "O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me."

The fear, too, that some disgrace will, through me, attach itself to the cause of God, is no small anxiety. But, above all, the weakness of my faith, the felt depravity of my heart, and the solemn inquiry, "Shall I be right at last?" weighs heavily on my heart. True, I am not at times without some sweet tokens of a Saviour's love. But, alas for me! the brightness is soon lost amidst the dim obscurity. Like Israel of old, I sing God's mercy and deliverance; but the very next trouble, like them, I fall into doubts and fears, as groundless as they are dishonourable to the God who hitherto has never failed or forsaken me.

It is not for me to arraign infinite wisdom, or anxiously to inquire

why my path should be so rough. My own dear Lord reflected honour in the vale of poverty by walking in it constantly while upon earth; and his privations were more painful than mine. I certainly do not wish an elevated station in society, knowing the many snares that attend it; but I fear that in many instances deep poverty is almost as dangerous, from the sickening care and anxiety which it engenders. Large measures of grace are required in both cases, I feel assured and know.

As at various times the Lord has been pleased to bless his own word from your mouth to my soul, so I would beg that I might have an interest in your addresses to the throne of grace. In your letters you have kindly named me, the most unworthy of remembrance. I am truly grateful for the kindness. Let me still possess a place in your memory, as a troubled fellow pilgrim, who, though she be now called to suffer with her Lord, still under all is enabled to hope that she shall also reign with him.

This will seem a strange epistle, but you must bear with my weakness, for His sake who will not have the lame and maimed thrust with side or shoulder. The day will yet come when I shall praise him with joyful lips, and looking back on the trying spots, shall bless my God for every one of them. May the Lord give you great peace, and much of his presence in your own soul, and largely bless your ministry!

So prays your unworthy sister in a Saviour's love,

B—, Oct. 17th, 1849.

C. M. C.

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

Blessed Jesus! we can add nothing to thee, nothing to thy glory; but it is a joy of heart to us that thou art what thou art, that thou art so gloriously exalted at the right hand of God; and we do long more fully and clearly to behold that glory, according to thy prayer and promise. (John xvii. 24.)—*Owen*.

When a powerful enemy is to be subdued, the great and leading inquiry is, where the strength of the enemy lies, that so it may be attacked in its principal strength; but if the ignorant world, that are strangers to the grace of God revealed in the gospel, should be examined and asked, Where does the strength of sin lie? they would never answer it as our apostle does here, (1 Cor. xv. 56;) yea, it would be a hard question, a difficult catechism, to the most part of gospel professors, especially such as are under the powerful influence of a legal spirit. It cannot but be a mystery to their understanding to hear, that "the strength of sin is the law." If the apostle Paul had been living and preaching in our day, it is likely, upon his delivering such doctrine as this, he had been taxed as a ringleader of Antinomians and enemies to the law; and it is plain from his Epistle he did not escape this reproach, which therefore we find him wiping off, (Rom. iii. 31.) "Do we, then, make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law."—*Ralph Erskine*.

I AM POOR AND NEEDY, YET THE LORD THINKETH
UPON ME.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied to you and yours, from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Some years have elapsed since we had any communication either by word or epistle. I have often regretted that we ever left off our correspondence, for there is no keeping up that union and sweet fellowship, as there ought to be, between the dear family of God, but by communicating what the dear Lord has done for us and is still doing. O the oneness and union I have felt toward you and yours!

I never knew why and wherefore it was, but you never answered my last letters. And as you did not I could not venture to write more. But having received a letter from my daughter, saying she had been to see you, and spent a very comfortable time with you, and that you would like to hear from me, I felt constrained to take up my pen.

I am nearly fifty-two years of age in my natural life, and thirty in my spiritual; and blessed be my God, I find him faithful to his promise as yet, and ever shall; though I am still a vile, sinful, polluted creature, not worthy of his notice, I can truly say with the psalmist, "I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me." O what a mercy, that the Almighty puts up with our provocations, and backslidings, and revoltings in the wilderness; and yet to be favoured with that precious grace of faith to believe we are accepted in the Beloved and are complete in him! Not in ourselves; O no! self in myself I hate, and I can truly say with Erskine,

"To good and evil equal bent,
I'm both a devil and a saint."

I find to this day that the old man is corrupt, and can do nothing but sin against God and Christ, and rebel against the dispensations of his providence toward us. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." And sure I am there are few know anything of the trials the children of God go through in this warfare. Almost every one is under some legal works, thinking to merit something at the hand of God. O what a mercy to be completely knocked off from this sandy foundation!

I am in a very trying path. Often the Lord is very "merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy;" and I am not left without some touches of his precious love; but it is often followed with such a hell, that I am led to doubt and fear whether I am truly led by the Spirit of God, and I am constrained to cry out with the prophet, "Woe is me, for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips!" These are very trying paths. Such is my state often, that I have nothing to rest my poor weary soul upon but the promise of God, and can truly say with Hart,

"I on thy promises depend,
At least I to depend desire."

“No other stay have I beside;
 If these can alter I must fall.
 I look to thee to be supplied
 With life, with will, with power, with all.
 Rich souls may glory in their store;
 But Jesus will relieve the poor.”

I have no doubt that you also can sing of the mercy of the Almighty. O yes, it is all of grace from first to last. And sure I am we can bring forth no fruit but by that union that subsists between Christ and his church. And every longing, breathing, and panting feeling after the dear Lord proves we are united to him. What a mercy to be a mourner in Zion! I am led daily to mourn over the wickedness of my corrupt, evil, and deceitful heart. O that the dear Lord may be with you and yours under your various trials, temptations, and afflictions, and enable you to watch his kind hand in all things. Cast yourself upon him with all your cares and burdens, for be assured he careth for you. There are many “fear nots” in the precious word of God. “Fear not, Abraham, for I am with thee.” And again, “Fear not, worm Jacob.” I seem often to have nothing to rest my weary soul upon but the bare promises of God, without any sensible feeling of his presence.

O may the dear Lord abundantly bless you with his endearing presence, is the prayer of your affectionate friend and brother,

J. H.

W—, July 20th, 1842.

BUT WE GLORY IN TRIBULATION ALSO.

Dear Brother,—May the good Lord bless thee and thine with the enjoyment of those precious things which descend from the ancient mountains of the eternal purposes of Jehovah, and from the everlasting hills of God's electing, unchanging, and irreversible love in Christ Jesus our Lord!

And what have we to brace up the loins of our mind with as with a girdle, beneath the fluctuating changes within, and the mysterious dispensations of God's providence, had we not this confidence, that where he begins a good work he will carry on and accomplish that work in spite of all opposition? On this basis is my hope; here are my boast and all my glory in God's everlasting love in Christ Jesus. And was it not the glory of the apostle also, think you? I know you do think it was, when he said, “We glory in tribulation also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope.”

We are by Truth informed, and we know it is a truth, that it is through much tribulation that we must enter the kingdom. Your tribulation and mine outwardly differ, but inwardly they are one. We find the way to be narrow and strait, and sorely beset with the thorns of the wilderness; a path, indeed, which the vulture's eye hath not with all its penetration seen, nor the lion's whelps trod. No, the gate is too strait for his eye to penetrate, and the path within

too narrow for a hypocrite to tread. Christ is the Way, as is written: "I am the way." And again: "And an highway shall be there, (Where? In Zion,) and a way." This highway is Christ, and the way is the way in the highway which every ransomed soul must travel. And this way shall be a path of tribulation.

But says the apostle, who well knew what it was, "Tribulation worketh patience." Now, tribulations, or afflictions, are ordained as means under the hand of God for purification, as is written: "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and shall purify the sons of Levi." Again: "I have refined them, but not with silver." That God doth visit man with affliction, and yet the heart of man is not purified, nor turneth to him that smiteth, is certain from observation and the word of truth. Cain was a man who knew the afflicting judgment of God in his own conscience, but he turned not to him that smote him, but, like every one destitute of the Spirit of life, went to another quarter. Saul was afflicted in an outward way, and he knew the hand of God was gone out against him; but did he turn to him that afflicted him? No, but he went to the witch, and his trust was in her. "Curseth is man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." But we will leave these characters, and go to those on whom it had a different effect, who turned to him that smote them. I believe this is a safe criterion by which a poor sinner may decide on which part he is.

We have no account in all the Bible of any poor soul, under an afflicting dispensation, who turned to God and was rejected; not one. And how has it been with us, my friend? We have had a share of affliction, inward and outward; but have we not been constrained to turn to him that smote us? Really, my friend, I have at times, when before God in prayer, enjoyed from this consideration a soul-satisfaction which has assured me that no hypocrite could come here. I have risen confidently satisfied, though not delivered, that this was the way, and by faith have seen the footsteps of the flock. What a condescension it is in the Most High God, in the midst of our affliction to lend a gracious ear, make bare his arm, revive us in the midst of trouble, and enable us by faith to lay hold upon him as our God and Saviour, and to feel a peace and satisfaction which assure us that the dispensation under which we are labouring is all in love, and shall in time work for our real good. And what effect has it? Does it not enable us to bow the shoulder with resignation, to bear all that Infinite Wisdom is pleased to appoint for us, and with patience to wait to see what God the Lord will speak in the end?

Thus says one: "I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined his ear unto me, and heard my cry;" and says another, "I will stand on my watch-tower, to see what the Lord will speak." Sweet place to stand in! and in this tower proof of our faith is made. A man destitute of the Spirit and grace of Christ can by no means stand here. No, Saul must enter into the priest's office and offer sacrifice. He would not wait for Samuel; and our nature is too much like this man Saul's. I cannot wait, but am always waiting to see the

end: "Your time is always ready, but my time is not yet come." But if the good Lord were to give you immediate answers to prayer, where would be the labour of faith and work of patience?

"Tribulation worketh patience." The poor soul exercised with tribulation must first have a discovery, with the eye of the new man, that God hath a special regard for him, before patience can be brought forth; and this at times takes up a considerable space of time: for in general when the good Lord is pleased to bring on affliction, it is twofold: he brings the dispensation on outwardly, then hides his face, and the soul is troubled, as was the case with Job. But when faith penetrates the dispensation, and discovers the special regard of God, then says the poor soul, "All things shall work together for good." Then comes patience, and willingly offers to wait.

"Patience worketh experience, and experience hope." Here the poor sinner, having a knowledge of the moving cause of the dispensation, sues for mercy; and while suing, the Lord is pleased to draw near, extend his mercy, and make the poor sinner know and feel that it is extended; then hope begins to wax strong: and this hope doth not make the poor sinner ashamed. No; but it makes him, with a humble boldness, draw near confidently to his God. And why so? Because the love of God is shed abroad in his heart.

To acknowledge and confess our iniquities is the way to get rid of our affliction. But really, though a great deal of my foolishness has been discovered, yet I am indeed at times much afraid there is in my heart some undiscovered sin, being yet kept in these bonds. But be it so, I am constrained to say, God is gracious, he hath given me to know that my hope is cast within the vail. And so sweet have been his visits at times, that he has assured me that neither wind nor storms can or shall remove it. How precious is his love! How it dissolves the heart! What a glow of affection it causes! How it brightens up the prospects for the world immortal, and puts a longing in the soul for a nearer access to him! O my friend, what can be compared to it! It so completely cuts me off from all created things or beings, that at times I long to be from the body: but Jordan makes me shudder—nature is so averse to it. The thought at times makes me tremble. By all appearance, however, I must soon cross it.

The good Lord is very gracious in his providence both to me and mine. He sometimes suffers me to go on till all things become general, or come in as common or of course. Then he makes me feel my wants, and causes me to cry, to let me know that from him comes my supply. He hears me and sends to my relief; so you see my heart doth not grow much better, prone to depart.

I vainly talked of coming down; but March begins to search me, and I seem to go back. The will of God I cannot ascertain, whether life or death; but trust I am resigned to either. Don't forget to pray for the afflicted one.

PRAYER, AND ITS ANSWERS.

Those who are interested in the finished work of the Son of God, and who have actually received it by sensible imputation in their souls, I have no doubt are led narrowly, more or less, to make diligent search as to the degree in which God hears their prayers; and also why they are more or less baffled in getting answers from God according to their wishes. "The simple believeth every word; but the prudent looketh well to his going," that he may know whereabouts he is, and not deceive himself, but measure himself effectually by divine aid, as to what God really thinks of him; why he does not get more answers to his prayers; why he has so little access; and why God and he are so little acquainted; less so than he wishes, when the single eye shines within him, filling all the earthly house of his body with divine light.

God is a sovereign. But still is there not a cause also for my getting so few answers? To resolve into, and put everything on, the sovereignty of God (though a truth) is only half the battle. We must also search for Achans and golden wedges, if, peradventure, through the divine blessing, we can cleanse our way more between God and our souls.

"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." What must it be, then, if we regard iniquity in our words or actions? If we call on the Father, who, without the least respect of elect persons, judgeth according to every justified saint's personal goings on, may we not see reasons here, as well as in divine sovereignty, why we get but few answers? As we are bought with a price, and are not our own, if we live to ourselves, contrary to his direction, will it not stop prayer, or rather, its answers? Assuredly it will. Living to ourselves, in other words, carnality and worldliness, will hinder answers to our prayers. Sowing to the flesh, and not to the Spirit, will hinder answers to prayer. Barrenness negatively, as well as any iniquity positively, will hinder answers.

I never received this doctrine from man. It was forced more particularly on my attention on an expected deathbed (indeed, in the very jaws of death) about three years ago; and for a couple of years before, it had been brewing in my poor mind, in prayer and reading the Scriptures, (soberly interpreted, and not twisted out of their fair and legitimate bearing and proportion of faith,) as to faith and its consequences and fruits.

God will never alter the Bible to please me or any body else. I candidly confess that I have found myself wanting in many respects, according to the sacred Scriptures, those only standards of God, authorised infallibly and without imperfection to judge of our state and condition by before God. The Judge is appointed. And the *only* statute book, the Bible, He, the Judge, will judge by. Then let us not ourselves deceive.

I am as sound as any man on the atonement and imputed righteousness, and do also as firmly believe in imputed sanctification; and

with humility and gracious fear before God and man, calmly say that I have received them as mine from God, and have the blissful joy, sweet peace, and happy serenity arising therefrom, in my soul.

I love also every elect soul, be he beggar or gentleman. And I have many times felt that I could lay down my life, if God demanded it and circumstances justified it, for any elect man or woman on the earth. "He laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren," (1 John iii. 16.) "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die. Yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die."

And what God hath taught me, (as I have stated,) and also even on a deathbed, I, as health and opportunity offered, have at times declared, for "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ;" neither do I wish to be disobedient to any heavenly vision (in accordance with Scripture) that the glorious God has stooped and condescended in love and mercy to show me.

Therefore I show my opinion as to answers to prayer.

I believe deliberately, that the sovereignty and will of God, **FIRST**, bounds and limits answers, and agreement of God to our prayers. **SECONDLY**, what we sow we reap. Our carnality, worldly ways, maxims, and conformity thereto, and our shortcomings in being transformed, hinder prayer and its answers in us. Presenting not our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable; our remains and measure of sinful conformity to the flesh and the world; of living to the flesh, and of walking according to it; (living after the flesh, we shall, and are to, die proportionately;) deathliness, distance, God not being well pleased graciously; these things hinder answers. Pride, love of respectability, despising others and the poorest of the poor, hinder answers. Our devilish self-importance; dabbling unnecessarily in worldly things, politics, newspapers, arts and sciences; being tickled with the wisdom of men, entertained with the wisdom of the wise; prospect-seeing, sight-seeing;—I have heard of good people going to see the pride of life in pictures, &c., in the mansions and parks of the rich, who are mostly Satan's livery servants;—improper books, that is, nearly all of them in the present sea of printed books; the mind dissipated thereby; the thoughts scattered; time (that invaluable gift) wasted, and not redeemed; these things will hinder answers. I have heard even of one or two good people actually opening their shops on a Sunday morning. Sabbath breaking, therefore, (in a gospel-understood sense,) railway-mania, laying up money; all these will hinder answers. The cares, the pleasures, the riches, the lusts of this world, tend to hinder answers from God, and choked the thorny-ground hearers, that they could not bring any fruit, neither answers of prayer nor anything else, to perfection. Therefore, godly fear will have to teach you to use the world with a slack hand, that is, as though you used it not, but as a mere crucified, and so dead-alive tenant-at-will, if you would get answers from God. The flesh and the world are a thick cloud, and God has told you, you must be crucified to both of them; or else shyness, distance, and opposition will, in the same degree, be the consequence between you and God.

All these things may be called *legal* by men in carnal security and settled on their lees. But that will not alter God's determination to punish the men settled on their lees. (Zeph. i. 12.) Neither does the helplessness of the creature shelter them. For, though without Christ we can do nothing, yet, with Christ, we can, and are to be enabled to wish and strive to do all things which God requires, out of gratitude and love, (not merit,) in the Scriptures to be done. Woe be to the fruitless barren branches, the fig-trees with only leaves on, the cumber-grounds, and even any so far who say it is all in Christ the Head, and yet have not a tender conscience! I rejoice in my completeness in Christ, without even the blessed Spirit's work in the heart; for imputed sanctification is an everlasting truth. Yet

"Nothing Jesus did or spoke,
Henceforth let me ever slight,
For I love His easy yoke,
And find His burden light."

And his yoke and burden is not only to be enabled to believe in him through divine power, but also out of love and gratitude, as the consequences, (not through merit,) to do in a gospel sense, in thought, word, or deed, whatever the same blessed Jesus has revealed as his will in the Scriptures to be done.

Bunyan confirms this doctrine as follows:

"It is the sensible sinner, the self-bemoaning sinner, the self-judging sinner, the self-abhorring sinner, and the self-condemning sinner, whose prayers prevail with God for mercy. Hence I infer, that one reason why men make so many prayers, and prevail no more with God, is because their prayers are rather the floatings of pharisaical fancies than the FRUITS OF SOUND SENSE OF SIN, and sincere desires of enjoying God in mercy and in the fruits of the Holy Ghost."

Thus, want of sound sense of sin, in other words, to be duly sensible of our sins, a want of this in degree will so far mar and hinder sensible and feeling Christianity in the soul; for how can we have the blood of sprinkling, except so far as we see our malady and disease? The Holy Ghost must give the wound, and show us our short-comings, or else how can the finished work of Christ, like a healing-plaister and wedding-garment, fit us in suitability? Thus, I infer that there are two things which must indispensably be ours in the same degree as we are gospelly-perfect. First, naming the name of Christ. Secondly, departing from iniquity. First, a supernaturally, personally, individually, revealed Christ as ours to the soul. Secondly, a knowledge, also worked out feelingly by Christ's Spirit within us, that in the same degree as we negatively or positively are left to regard iniquity in our heart, lip, or life, by not having sound confession and forsaking of it, that in the same degree Christ *will not hear our prayers*.

And I know that this doctrine will cut as close as a razor or a sword; for it has cut me close, and has searched all the inmost parts of my soul. And in the same degree as we cannot first glory in the Lord alone, as ours by imputation, without works; and secondly,

come to the light, and stay in the light, that it may be made manifest that our deeds are wrought in God, in Christ; in the same degree we shall not get answers to our prayers. "Let a man, therefore, think soberly of himself, and not more highly than he ought to think." "For a just weight is God's delight, but a false balance is an abomination unto the Lord." How many things have I found myself wanting in, and do find myself wanting in! but he that feareth the Lord shall come forth of them all. For in the same degree as we feel we are perfect in Christ, in the same degree we are made willing and zealous to do negatively and positively whatever Christ wishes us, out of love or gratitude, that loatheth and perfectly abhorreth merit. This, and this only, is the man who, with a fearless step, with humility, can enter into the courts of the Lord and stand upon his holy hill. This is the man that shall be greatly prevalent with God in prayer; yea, verily, and none besides such as he.

Abingdon.

I. K.

THE LITTLE CITY BESIEGED AND DELIVERED; OR
THE DELIVERANCE OF THE CHURCH BY CHRIST,
AND THE INGRATITUDE OF MEN TO THE GLO-
RIOUS REDEEMER REPRESENTED.

BY RALPH ERSKINE.

"There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it; now, there was found in it a poor wise man; and he, by his wisdom, delivered the city; yet no man remembered the same poor man."—ECCLESIASTES ix. 14, 15.

(Continued from page 12.)

II. The second thing in the method was, *To speak of the great siege laid against the little city.*

I shall here consider both *who the great king is* that came against the city; and *what are the great bulwarks* built against it. And here, according to the view I gave in the explication,

1. By the great king we may understand *the great God*, in his awful justice, who, upon the sin of man, became an enraged enemy to the whole city of mankind; and to whose wrath the little city, which he chose out of the world, is by nature as much exposed as the rest; for, being all children of disobedience, they are "by nature children of wrath even as others;" (Eph. ii. 2, 3;) and therefore, his first appearance to them, even when he has a mind to make them a city for himself to dwell in, his first appearance, I say, to them is in terrible majesty, laying siege to their souls, and building great bulwarks against them. But possibly you may say,

What bulwarks? Even the great bulwarks of law-curses and law-threatenings; for in a work of conviction, and compunction, and legal humiliation, which usually precedes any gospel-work and saving change, he applies the curse and threatenings of the law to their conscience, saying, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." (Gal. iii. 10.) In

so much, that the soul finds itself to be an accursed creature, and is put in fear of everlasting damnation. The rest of the world, who shall eternally feel this heavy wrath of God in another state, yet lie sleeping without fear of it in this world; but the little city, that shall for ever be delivered from it, are now in this world mercifully awakened and alarmed with the fear of it, that they may prize the Saviour and Deliverer of the city. The great God storms the city with his terrible artillery, like great warring cannons surrounding a little city. He thunders from Sinai, and builds great bulwarks against it: the great bulwark of a broken law; the great bulwark of a threatened curse; the great bulwark of offended holiness; and the great bulwark of enraged justice; in a word, all the infinite perfections of God, injured and dishonoured by their sin, appear planted about the city in battle array. When the great God himself appears an enemy, breaking them with breach upon breach, and running upon them sometimes like a giant, and saying, as Deut. xxxii. 40, "Who can deliver out of my hand? for I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever. If I whet my glittering sword, and my hand take hold of judgment, I will render vengeance to mine enemies; I will make mine arrows drunk with blood." Yea, not only in the first awakening work doth God thus appear formidable to them, for their trial and correction. Thus Job found the great bulwarks of God's terrible majesty built up against him when he said, (chap. vi. 4,) "The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirits; the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me." Thus Heman, "While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted: thy fierce wrath goes over me; thy terrors have cut me off." (Ps. lxxxviii. 15.) But,

2. By the great king we may understand *the devil*, in his desperate malice against the little city; he is called a prince, a prince of the power of the air, [or of darkness,] "that rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience." (Eph. ii. 2.) This mighty and malicious prince, in the beginning of the world, came against the little city of mankind, when there were but few men in it; yea, when there was but one man and one woman in the city, in a literal sense; and he besieged it, and built great bulwarks of flattering falsehoods and lying temptations against it; and conquered the city, and destroyed it; as you read Gen. iii. concerning the sin and fall of our first parents, through the powerful subtlety of the serpent. And he continues still to besiege and destroy sinners by his malice and subtlety, force and fraud; and especially he raises "great bulwarks" against the little city.

What bulwarks? Why, even his manifold temptations, devices, and fiery darts: "We are not ignorant of his devices." (2 Cor. ii. 11.) We are called to take, above all things, the shield of faith, that we may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; for "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers." (Eph. vi. 12, 16.) The devil attacks the city both by high bulwarks and deep mines; we read of the depths of Satan, (Rev. ii. 24;) and being the prince of this world, (for so he is called John xii.

31. and elsewhere,) he has thousands of wicked instruments by which he batters and besieges the little city. He has a deceitful party for him within, as well as without the little city; within the church, as well as without it. Within the church visible he has his treacherous Judases to deliver the city into his hand, and to betray the interest of the city, and the liberties and privileges thereof. We read of the devil's armour, (Luke xi. 22,) where he is called "the strong man armed, keeping his palace;" but when a stronger than he comes upon him, and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armour. And what that armour is, we may partly know from 2 Cor. iv. 4, "The god of this world blinds the minds of them that believe not;" hellish darkness excluding and opposing gospel-light; the darkness of ignorance, the darkness of error, and the darkness of delusion. This is a great part of the devil's armour, together with high imaginations, carnal reasonings, pride, prejudices, and exalting thoughts, mentioned 2 Cor. x. 5. These are part of his armour and his great bulwarks.

3. By the great king we may understand *sin*; sin is the great king that reigns in and over us naturally; therefore, says the apostle, (Rom. vi. 12,) "Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies." Sin and Satan are always confederates together; and their power is very great, insomuch that all men are subject to the rule and government thereof. And as all the children of men are slaves unto sin as their king, so all the children of God, in this world, are many times captive to it. "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind; and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin that is in my members." (Rom. vii. 3.) The power and authority of sin is called a law, even the law of sin and death, which nothing can free us from but "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." (Rom. viii. 2.)

Now, what bulwarks doth this great king build against the little city? Indeed, sin has the strongest bulwarks in the world—it hath self for a bulwark; and hence, for a man to destroy sin is to destroy himself in effect, and the best and most useful parts of himself, his right hand, his right eye, his members. (Col. iii. 5.) "Mortify, therefore, your members that are upon the earth." When a man destroys his lusts, he denies himself. And self is so mighty, that it competes with King Jesus, and fights for the throne, even after Christ has taken possession of the heart. Self-ease, self-pleasure, self-will, self-wisdom, self-love, self-esteem, self-righteousness, are the bulwarks of sin. It hath also the law for a bulwark: "The strength of sin is the law." (1 Cor. xv. 56.) The law of sin is strengthened by the law of works, the strength of sin being a grand part of the curse of the law of works, insomuch that no power can destroy that bulwark but the power that can give full satisfaction to the law; hence the strong bulwark of sin is never broken down till a man has, by faith, closed with the law-satisfying righteousness of Christ. Again,

4. By the great king we may understand *death*, the king of terrors. (Job. xviii. 14.) Death is a mighty king, that all the sinful

race of Adam are lawful captives unto; and such is the constant battle that death gives even to the true-born children of Zion, the little city, that when all other enemies are defeated and destroyed, death is the last upon the field: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (1 Cor. xv. 26.) Again,

What bulwarks does this king build against the little city? There are two great bulwarks he builds: the one before, and the other behind it. Before death there stands the bulwark of terror and fear, because of sin, which is the sting of death; and hence many within the little city are "kept long in bondage through fear of death." (Heb. ii. 15.) The terrors of death sometimes compass them about, and the fears of hell on the back of death. Again, behind death there is another bulwark, and that is seeming victory. When death gets soul and body separate, and the body made death's prisoner in the grave, where the worms destroy it and rottenness seems to ride in triumph over it; and this is the reason why it is said to be the last enemy that shall be destroyed; because it has a seeming victory over the visible part of the believer, till the last trumpet sounds, and the dead be raised incorruptible, immortal, &c.

III. The next thing was, *To speak of the deliverance of the city, and the raising of the siege.* And here we are led, by the text, to consider, 1. How the Deliverer is described; 2. How the deliverance is effected.

1. Consider how the Deliverer is described: "There was found in the city a poor wise man." And here he is set before us, so that we may consider him,

First, in his *humanity*, as a Man. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Saviour and Deliverer, was a man. He was prophesied of before, that he should be the seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham; and in the fulness of time he was made of a woman, born of a virgin. The Word was made flesh; and he became man, a true man; he went through all the stages of man—conception, childhood, youth, riper age. He was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." He was a mortal, as we are; and actually died, as we must. He died a painful, shameful, and ignominious death.

Secondly, we may consider the Deliverer in his *divinity*, as a WISE Man. Wisdom dwells not with fallen men; they had all their heads cracked by the fall of Adam, and are become fools, having folly bound up in their nature. Therefore the Man who is the Deliverer, must be a man that never fell in Adam, a wise man, that is, God as well as man; one that, with the nature of man, hath the wisdom of God; yea, and is the wisdom of God. (1 Cor. i. 24.) It is he that says, "I wisdom dwell with prudence." (Prov. viii. 12.) And it is of him the Father says, "My servant shall deal prudently." (Isa. lii. 13.) And it is by his infinite wisdom that he delivered the city; of which more afterwards. He is essentially wise, being Wisdom itself; the God whose understanding is infinite. He is communicatively wise, having all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hid in him, and the Spirit of wisdom to give.

Thirdly, We may view the Deliverer in his *humiliation*, as a poor Man; poor in outward respects: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet, for our sakes, he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich." (2 Cor. viii. 9.) He had all the riches and all the fulness of the Godhead in him, yet he became poor. Many are poor against their will, but he became poor voluntarily; he became a poor servant; though he thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet he took upon him the form of a servant; taking on him our nature, not in its best condition, but in the lowest state of our nature. He became poor in his birth, poor in his life, and poor in his death. He was born, not of a queen, but of a mean virgin; born, not in a palace, but in a stable, laid in a manger. The foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests; but the Son of Man had not where to lay his head. He had nothing to pay tribute withal till he ordered a fish to bring it. He was ministered unto in his life and in his death, by reason of his real extreme poverty. He was poor as Man, and yet wise as God. The poverty of men and the wisdom of God met and centred in him.

Fourthly, We may consider the Deliverer in his *destination to this work*; he was FOUND in the city. He was found of God, who says, "I have found a ransom;" "I have found David my servant." (Job xiii. 24; Psalm lxxxix. 20.) He was found in the city, among men; "and was chosen out of the people." (Psalm lxxxix. 19.) He was found "in fashion as a man." (Phil. ii. 8.) He was found willing and cheerfully ready to undertake this work of redemption and deliverance. (Psalm xl. 6; Heb. x. 6.) "Lo, I come; I delight to do thy will." He was found able and well qualified for the work, (Psalm lxxxix. 19:) "I have laid help upon One that is mighty." And as he had a personal fitness, being God as well as Man, and God-Man in one Person; so he that found him did also fit him by the supereminent unction of the Holy Ghost. (Psalm lxxxix. 20.) "I have found David my servant, with my holy oil have I anointed him." Thus, "Him hath God the Father sealed" for this work. (John vi. 27.) And this is what Christ acknowledges of himself, (Isa. lxi. 1,) "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God;" to deliver the city.

2. *How the deliverance is effected.* Here two things are to be a little opened: 1. The matter of his work: "He delivered the city." 2. The manner of the deliverance: "By his wisdom."

First, In general, the *matter of his redemption-work*: "He delivered the LITTLE CITY;" he raised the siege. Here we are to view how he manages the work, in opposition to the great kings that built great bulwarks against the little city.

(1.) If we view the siege as formed by the Great King; that is, *the Great God*, when the great bulwarks built against the city are, the broken law of God, cursing the sinner; and the injured attributes of God, viz., justice, holiness, and truth, all standing in battle array against the sinner; behold, the poor wise Man, he comes and fulfils

that law that we had broken, and bears the curse that we had incurred: "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." (Gal. vi. 4.) "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." (Gal. iii. 13.) And in this way he satisfies the justice of God, vindicates the holiness of God, and clears the truth of God: "Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling savour." (Eph. v. 2.) He is become "the Lord our Righteousness;" and "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes;" and in him "mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other," that God might save and show mercy on the little city, in consistency with the honour of his injured attributes, which are now glorified more by his obedience and satisfaction than ever they were dishonoured by our sin and rebellion. Thus he broke down the great bulwarks that the great King of heaven and earth had built against the little city, and that by the King's order and allowance, and according to his command and will: "This commandment have I received of my Father."

(2.) If we view the siege as formed by the devil, the great *king of hell* "and prince of the power of darkness, that rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience," we shall find him raising this siege partly by the price of his blood, that he shed for us; and partly by the power of his Spirit, which is given to us. By the price of his blood he delivers from the devil's kingdom; for "by death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Heb. xi. 14.) And "for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." (1 John iii. 8.) And he was thus manifested, according to the original promise, (Gen. iii. 15,) "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent." Christ took a wooden cross, as it were, a tree in his arms, and therewith beat down the great bulwarks that Satan built against the little city. As by means of a tree the devil built his battering engine, so by means of a tree Christ demolished his building. For upon the cross Jesus Christ "spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." (Col. ii. 15.) Again, by the power of his Spirit he destroys the devil's bulwarks, when he gives spiritual armour to the citizens, the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, and the rest of that spiritual armour mentioned Eph. vi. 11—17; whereby they quench the fiery darts of the devil, demolish his bulwarks, resist the devil, and overcome by the power and strength of the Captain of their salvation. Though they constantly fight while here, yet they gradually defeat the devil and his instruments, that oppose themselves to Christ and his people, to his cause and interest. Truth prevails always at last; and the friends of truth "overcome by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony." (Rev. xii. 11.)

(3.) If we view the siege as formed by the great king *Sin*, which naturally reigns in our mortal bodies, how doth the poor wise man destroy the great bulwarks thereof? Why, this he doth meri-

toriously, giving himself a sacrifice for sin. (John i. 29.) "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." (Heb. ix. 26.) "But now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." And then he doth it efficaciously; and that partly by the actual imputation of his righteousness, for removing the guilt of sin in justification. In justification he destroys the legal power of sin; for "the strength of sin is the law;" but when the righteousness of God is imputed and received, and Christ is "become the end of the law for righteousness" to the person, then the law, being satisfied, has no more power to keep the person under the curse, whereof the power of sin is the leading part. And again, in sanctification, he destroys the actual reigning power of sin. Both these are imported, I think, in that word, (Rom. viii. 2,) "The law of the Spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death;" and both are particularly spoken of in the following verses, 3 and 4: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God [did], sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Here is the legal power of sin destroyed; and verse 13: "If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live;" there is the destroying of the actual reigning power of sin. Thus, by his pardoning and purifying grace, he demolishes the bulwarks of sin, and all by the means of the gospel, as it is the power of God to salvation: "The weapons of this warfare being not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God; and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Cor. x. 4, 5.) Again,

(4.) If we view the siege as formed by the great king *Death*, behold, our King Jesus, the poor wise Man, delivers the city, by overturning the great bulwarks that death built; and this he doth by removing both the sting of death and the victory of the grave. "The sting of death is sin," which he removes, as I have been just now saying, both meritoriously and efficaciously, till it be perfectly removed in glory, where we shall be like him, by seeing him as he is. The victory of the grave, which is corruption; the corruption of the body he is to remove at the great day, when "this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality." And that saying shall be brought to pass, "Death is swallowed up in victory." Hence in the faith of all this the believer may sing that triumphant song, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, that has given us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. xv. 54—57.) Thus you have a view of the deliverance in the matter of it. But then,

Secondly. In particular, we are led here to consider the *manner* of it. It was in infinite wisdom: "He by his (infinite) wisdom delivered the city." As it is said of his works of creation, "In wisdom hath

he made them all;" so of his work of redemption, "In wisdom hath he delivered the city. He made the earth by the word of his power, established the world by his wisdom, and stretched out the heavens by his discretion." (Jer. x. 12.) And it is even he who, by his wisdom, delivered the city. Particularly,

First, By his wisdom he *removed all the impediments* that stood in the way of our salvation, while he gave himself a ransom for many, satisfied the law and justice of God, defeated the devil, destroyed sin, and conquered death. And thus, except one great king, whom he brings to peace and reconciliation with the city, he destroyed all the other great kings, and their great bulwarks, inso-much that we may say, "He smote great kings, for his mercy endureth for ever; and slew famous kings, for his mercy endureth for ever!" O the infinitely wise Captain of salvation, who could, by his wisdom, deliver a little city so powerfully besieged!

Secondly, By his wisdom he *united the most distant and contrary extremes*, while God and man are joined in one Person, the infinite and eternal God with a bit of clay; which is a mystery ten thousand times greater than if an angel had become a worm. He became a poor man, that he might deliver the poor city. "Great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh."

Thirdly, By his wisdom he *united the most contrary interests*, God's interest and man's; the interest of his glory and our salvation; which were quite different after the fall. In some respects, (when man came to have no other interest than that of the devil,) God's interest and glory seemed to require man's destruction; and yet it was man's interest to be delivered; God's interest, in infinite wisdom, is made to agree with the interest of the little city, while Christ is set forth to be a propitiation, that the glory of God's justice and righteousness might be reached as much in saving the city, as it can be by destroying them who are without the city; nay, more.

Fourthly, By his wisdom he *united the most contrary affections*, namely, God's hatred and love: his hatred of sin, and his love to the sinner. Nothing more hateful to God than sin, and yet nothing more dear to God than the sinner that is in Christ, in whom God is well pleased. Infinite wisdom contrived the reconciliation of the opposite-like affection in God, that the city might be delivered by the wisdom of God in a mystery, the manifold wisdom of God.

Fifthly, By his wisdom he *brings about the greatest things by the most unlikely means*. In delivering the city, who would have thought that the seed of a poor woman, that was deceived, should bruise the head of the serpent, the deceiver; that a poor woman should bring forth a poor man child; that that poor Man should conquer all the armed legions of hell; that "by his stripes we should be healed," and by his blood we should be washed; and that this blood should sap the foundations of all the great bulwarks that were raised against the little city?

Sixthly, By his wisdom he *brings the greatest good out of the greatest evil*. Could there be anything worse than sin? Yet out of this, wisdom brings greater glory to God and greater happiness to

man. God had built the fabric of the old covenant with brick, as it were; the devil and our first parents pulled it down. But, says God, I will build with cedar, and all the devils in hell shall not bring it down. "Mercy shall be built up for ever." (Psalm lxxxix. 2.) O here is wisdom! And we may say, "To the King eternal, immortal, the only wise God, be glory and honour for ever and ever. Amen." (1 Tim. i. 17.)

(To be concluded in our next.)

THE MARVELLOUS LOVING-KINDNESS OF THE LORD.

Dear Friend,—I hope this will find you and your dear spouse, and all the friends in and about Brighton, in health, both of body and mind; that is, if it be the good pleasure of our dear covenant God and Father.

Through mercy, I found my wife much better, and left her in the country with one of my daughters; but am sorry to say, last Saturday we received a letter saying she had experienced another relapse, but was now somewhat better. What my dear Lord means to do with me I cannot tell. My judgment tells me that he will not do me any harm, either in my own person or in the person of my dear wife, but my feelings fight very much against his proceedings. Yet I feel it an infinite mercy that my dear Lord changes not, and that whether he is pleased to let me enjoy his love or not, still his love is the same, the very same. This to me is of infinitely more importance than all the world. The marvellous loving-kindness of the Lord to such a poor, feeble, blind, empty, base, foolish creature as I, surpasses all human understanding; and when my blessed Lord is pleased to let me enjoy the sweetness of it, I am lost in wonder, love and praise.

I have often thought of Brighton since I was there; and to the honour of my dear Master I can say, that I felt it in some blessed measure to be *Bright-on* to my poor soul, that is, some part of the time; and I believe I had not the feast alone, but that some of God's dear family shared it with me.

I sincerely thank you and all friends for your expressions of kindness. They were vastly seasonable, and I believe my dear Master will not forget them. Bless his precious name, he is a good Master to work for, and always pays well for labour. He never lets one of his servants hand out to another one cruise of cold water, but he pays him for his service. I know this well, and yet my old man finds fault both with his Person, work, and wages.

I have often wondered that he has not given me what they call in this country *the bag*. But I believe the reason is, because he delighteth in mercy, and is determined to take advantage of every circumstance to make that known.

I hope the Lord is with you and all the friends, of a truth. Give my love to them all. I shall be very happy to hear from you and to learn of your welfare. Give my love to friends at Eastbourn and

elsewhere. I often think of you all when I am with my best Friend; and I hope you will not forget me when it is well with you. May we all be kept at the feet of the Lord, much in watchfulness and prayer, closely examining the ground upon which we stand, ever resting upon the blessed Person and work of Christ, under the constant teaching of the ever-blessed Spirit; and then, come what may, all will be well. The Master's blessed presence be with you and all that love his name in truth, is the prayer of yours, with love to you, and yours, and all friends,

W. GADSBY.

A LETTER BY THE LATE MR. BROOK, OF BRIGHTON.

I have you often in remembrance; and, when tossed upon this troublesome world, sometimes envy your quiet track, not calling to mind that one course is appointed for all who will live godly in Christ Jesus, and that on this account you also have a share of those sufferings which are the peculiar portion of his elect. "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household?"

Blessed for ever be his gracious name for such condescension. "It is enough," &c., yes, and surely, if possible, more than enough; for whoever yet aspired to, or thought of such equality as this, even among the aspiring children of men? This distinction is always kept up, and much enforced. But not so with the Master of all teachers, and the Lord of all lords. A master is one who teaches, and a disciple is one who learns, or is taught. This our Master teaches nothing that he has not first learned. "Though he was a son, yet *learned* he obedience by the things which he suffered." It was in the school of adversity he was instructed, and in the same school he still presides and gives his lessons. "In all our affliction he is afflicted, for he can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." He thus stoops, as he has stooped, to our state. "He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." We say our lesson is hard, and our capacity small. True; and what said he? "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." "I am afflicted and ready to die, from my youth up. While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted." Come lower than this you cannot, except in one passage: "Our fathers trusted in thee, they trusted in thee and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered. They trusted in thee, and were not confounded. *But* (O what a but!) *I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people!*" What language! He now leads us through the same things; and, as we go, instructs us, that as he humbled himself to us, he may equal us with himself.

This Master at length became perfect. He was made perfect in his lessons through sufferings; and this was when he poured forth

his soul unto death, and yielded up his spirit. And, having endured the death of the cross, he is for ever sat down at the right hand of God; and, says he, "Where I am, there shall also my servant be." So, in sufferings and in glory, the disciple and the Master are alike. "It is enough that the disciple be as his Master," for he makes us as perfect as himself. And this is enough. "And the servant as his Lord." The Lord of life stooped to a menial office. He became a *servant*, "made under the law." He served and obeyed in all points. He became a servant of servants, the underling: "The Son of Man," says he, "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." "I am among you as he that serveth." He served God, and he waited upon sinners, and still waits. Yet he is in possession of all glory and power. "All things are delivered unto me of my Father." And we are like unto him. "He hath made us kings and priests unto God." We are "raised up together with him," and "made to sit together in heavenly places with him." And thus "it is enough for the servant to be as his Lord," for higher he cannot be.

These are the things we are to have and experience in this life; and they are what I am intent upon publishing to the world by my poor ministry. This I have done at Leicester, and not in vain. And, if there were no other proof, this is enough, that you are very, very close to my heart. There is no doubt upon my mind of the right of many among you to the tree of life. I believe we shall all one day eat of the fruit thereof, and live for evermore in the Paradise of God. To get a right view of the Lord Jesus in his humiliation and glory is the main thing, and that view is thus expressed: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Words these that will take up all eternity to make out and fulfil.

There is a most excellent man in these parts, whom Mr. C. knows very well, by the name of Morris, my best and fastest friend. He is now, it is believed, drawing near his end, at least so he is fully persuaded himself; and, in truth, he has been declining apace now for this fortnight. And the glorious work God has performed in his soul increases my apprehension that I shall lose him. At the beginning of his sickness, (a bowel complaint,) he found, as is usual, the old man discovering his deeds first. But in about six days God shone upon him in a most wonderful way, and, to express it in as few words as I can, the glory of God filled the temple. From that time to this, he has remained as full of God as he can hold. And so completely is he in heaven, that there is not a single tie so much as exercises his thought towards the earth; no, not even his own bodily sufferings, which now, I believe, are not great, so fully has God made all his bed in his sickness. He is an extraordinary man, and God makes an extraordinary display of his goodness upon him. When he is gone, he will leave few, very few such, behind him. It has been my blessed lot (for Mr. Jenkins is in Town) to be much with him; and we have had such sweet communication as will leave a

avour with it as long as I live. Such power shows forth itself through the rich unction upon him, that his house is filled with the odour of the ointment. He is fully persuaded he shall die, and, indeed, everything serves to establish it. He is most completely at rest. This is the word which best conveys an idea of his state, though to know it, it must either be seen or felt. Such things as these, my dear friend, endear God in a wonderful way, and refresh the souls of those who stand by. The faithfulness, goodness, grace, and glory of God, are preached most effectually to the heart; and a power and reality in true religion is then most forcibly acknowledged. Such is the end we hope and expect to attain; for, "mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." I could write a volume about his end, but this must suffice. Love to all friends.

W. J. BROOK.

P.S. I have just received a letter from his daughter, who was quickened through me a short time before I came into the north, and who, since her father's illness, has been raised to a comfortable hope. Her account gives no hope of his recovery. He has taken nothing for many days, but something to moisten his mouth. He has now been forbidden all further nourishment, and anybody to see him more; so that he is going very fast. "The memory of the just is blessed."

EVEN TO HOAR HAIRS WILL I CARRY YOU.

Messrs. Editors,—As our beloved father, Mr. W. Townshend, was so well known among a considerable number of the readers of your valuable periodical, I have sent you one of his last epistles to insert, according to your discretion, believing that the contents will be interesting to those friends who were conversant with him. I have also his last piece of poetry, headed, "Come, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he has done for my soul," which I will send to you afterwards, should you think proper to insert this.

We are, dear Sirs, yours affectionately,

B. & M. E. GREGORY.

Smethwick, near Birmingham, Sept. 26th., 1849.

Dear Mary,—As you are my first-born, you shall have the first-fruits of my pen, that is, the first reading of this. Not that I mean any distinction, but that you may all have an equal share, in the same order as Joseph served his brethren. And may you all have Benjamin's mess of spiritual and temporal blessings from the true Joseph, whose favour is better than life.

I have felt very thankful during my illness, that I have been spared to see you all settled comfortably in life, with a good hope of eternal life and glory; and that I have seen my children's children and peace upon Israel. Notwithstanding the turmoil of the world, which they are mixed up with, it cannot disturb that inward peace which passeth all understanding, and which is left as an everlasting legacy to the heirs of salvation.

It is very improbable that I shall see any of you this year, for I am reduced to a mere skeleton. My leg is so much swollen that I am obliged to write this on my lap. It is now three months since my first attack; and I have suffered greatly most of the time. But the Lord has wonderfully supported me; for, when at times hard thoughts would have intruded themselves, the blessed Remembrancer lifted up the standard of such truths as not only subdued them, but caused me to hope in his mercy, which hope is anchored on the Rock of ages; and the cable of my faith is that three-fold cord which cannot be broken—the everlasting, electing love of God the Father, the redeeming blood and righteousness of God the Son, and the quickening, regenerating, renewing, and sanctifying influence of God the Holy Ghost. Therefore, if it is possible for these to be broken, I am utterly lost; for I am a total wreck, and unfit for any service.

I am well aware that all these chastenings are requisite, although for the present they are not joyous, but grievous; yet in the midst of my anguish, my mind was exercised with such thoughts as these:

Although affliction is my lot,
My body rack'd with pain,
I would not change with him that's got
An emperor's domain.

Without the inward joy and peace
Which grace and truth afford,
I would not take the highest place
Of any earthly lord.

True joy, and peace, and living faith,
All spring from Sharon's root;
Whose resurrection, life, and death,
Produce all real fruit.

All else is spurious, fraught with ill,
Mix'd up with sin and death;
The cursed pride of man's free-will,
The greatest foe to faith.

Still, Lord, support my feeble frame
With joy, and peace, and love;
That nothing here may quench the flame
Which would ascend above.

For all's a bubble here below,
And transient as the air;
A scene of wretchedness and woe,
Of grief, and anxious care.

Contagious vanities are spread
Around through every sphere;
By which the general mass are fed,
The peasant and the peer.

From your affectionate father,

Bridgnorth, May 14th, 1845.

WM. TOWNSHEND.

[The writer of the above appears to have been the author of those pieces of poetry which at various times, especially in former years, were inserted in the "Standard" under the signature "Bridgnorth, W. T."]

Men, left to their own wills, will rather go to hell than be beholden to free grace for salvation. (John v. 40.)—*Elisha Cole.*

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 a 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. 10.

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ON ORIGINAL SIN, IN THAT EXPERIENCE WHICH
GOD TEACHETH; AND OF THE REAL CONDITION
OF ALL MEN IN A STATE OF NATURE.

What is sin? In answer to this question the Scripture declares, It is a transgression of the law. And to come to the primary act of disobedience, let us consider Adam in a state of innocency. God made man upright, pure in spirit and pure in body, and perfectly happy and blessed in his existence. The tenure on which it was held and to be continued was, obedience to a command given, namely, “Of every tree in the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” (Gen. ii. 16, 17.) Notwithstanding so plain and so faithful a warning, man transgressed. The Lord, unto whom all circumstances and events are known, suffered Satan to tempt Eve our first mother to disobey, and he prevailed; and she prevailed with her husband; and by this act of disobedience in our first parents came original sin. But who can define it? Who can draw its portrait? Nature recoils, and natural feelings often shudder, first at one act of perpetration and then at another committed by man, the subject of sin; yet all the individual acts of abomination and delinquency, of all the millions of the guilty sons and daughters of Adam’s race, are but so many polluted streams from a poisonous fountain. One theorist gives one fanciful exposition of it, and another perhaps quite an opposite; but of one thing I am fully persuaded in my own spirit, from solemn but painful experience, that until God the Spirit by his inward teachings

makes it known, every definition by man is without knowing spiritually what he says of whereof he affirms.

But I come to the word of God. "And you hath he quickened," says the apostle, "who were dead in trespasses and sins." (Ephes. ii. 1.) But diversified as may be the opinions of the professed ministers of the gospel, both in the Establishment and among the great body of Dissenters out of it too, on the nature of original sin, I fear this truth is more applicable to the profession of the present day than thousands are aware of: "Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." (Matt. xv. 14.) What a solemn declaration! but how few are alarmed at so momentous a truth! The Lord in his word declares, "If a man would be wise, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." How few professors are feelingly brought here! But the Lord's people are made acquainted with it, and they feel this self-knowledge to be to them in experience as a starting post, in the mystery of iniquity and the mystery of godliness, under this truth: "And they shall be all taught of God." (John vi. 45.) But I cannot forbear here to enlarge a little upon so solemn a declaration, being, as it was, spoken by the dear Redeemer himself.

There are two principal leading features under this teaching. The first is, self-acquaintance, by the teachings of the Spirit in the law of works. And the second is, an acquaintance with a sin-avenging God, reconciled to us in Christ the gospel of his grace. As to the first, in this the Lord acts as a sovereign, as to the strength or degree of power in conviction. But, however strong or faint these lines may be in many of the family of God, I, for one, who have felt the Lord gracious, have first known and felt him a consuming fire in his law. By degrees, or by little and little, the Lord under conviction leads his dear people into what sin is, and what they are as sinners; and in proportion as they are taught to see themselves as the Lord sees them, so in proportion are they earnest to do their utmost to break off their sins, by doing righteousness and making themselves holy. But the Lord will not suffer them to attain it in this way. All their attempts to work out a righteousness of their own fails them, for their mental darkness, step by step, so increases with their labour, that actually in their feelings they begin to tremble at what they begin to discover of themselves within. Indeed, they know no more about God's righteousness to trust in, though it is so plainly revealed in the written word, than if there were no such revelation in the Bible! They begin to know something of the dark side of the matter to purpose in such a scripture as this: "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." (Jude 6.) Instead of light, life, righteousness, and peace, darkness and blackness of darkness gather upon their soul. Go back into the world, in the enjoyment of the sinful pleasures of the flesh, he cannot; it has now become a City of Destruction to his soul. To go forward he trembles, and knows not which way to take, since all his holy doings seem verily

to make him worse than before. This paralyzes him, for he cannot in his present condition read the handwriting upon him. The progress of the soul is into darkness; and spirits of darkness, black as night, rise at length on the imagination in such temptations and terrifying ideas, that the poor soul begins to feel a terror in himself. He stands alone, as it were, in the world, under guilt and sin, and as his last refuge, the name of Jesus and hope in him seems as though it would be swept away as with a flood. All his self-forced repentance, self-examination, prayers, duties, and cries, all sink under him; he feels nothing but sin, and God nothing but wrath in him; he is, by feeling, nothing spiritually but Egyptian darkness, which may indeed be felt. He could in such a state as this as soon create a world as believe in Christ to the saving of the soul; he is brought to feel that as to believe savingly in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to merit heaven by his own righteousness, he could as soon do the latter as the former. He cannot believe that God has thoughts of peace towards him, for he growingly feels him as a consuming fire. The name of God is hell and terror to him, and he would fain get out of his hand. Now no created power can help him; he has helped himself as long as he could, by breaking off his sins, by self-examination, by abstinence, by mortification of the body, in retirement for prayer and reading, whenever he could get out of the way; but all this has failed him. In proportion to his labour and toil to make himself better, he feels the strength and terror of his convictions. He needs no persuasion to believe there is a devil to tempt, for he is as satisfied he is within him, under what he feels, as that he breathes the air. Bunyan, in his "Pilgrim's Progress," is not far from the truth, when he represents Apollyon meeting Christian in the Valley of Humiliation, and striding across his path to stop his further progress, and swearing by his infernal den, "Here will I spill thy soul." Nor does he want evidence there is a God, for he feels him to be a sin-avenging God. Shut up in unbelief and enmity, diabolical notions rise in his heart, and desperate feelings of rebellion against God, to curse him, and wish himself above him, that he might rob God of his power to punish sin. O what a wretch he feels himself to be in all this! He sees the God with whom he has to do a perfectly holy, pure, and almighty Being, and his beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to be so too; but he feels he could as soon annihilate creation and make all things new, as believe God would give so holy a Son for such a devil as he feels and sees himself to be. This seems to lock him up in the dungeon of despair for ever, as a vessel fitting for destruction. This despair creates awful throes of fierce desperation in his spirit; and so strong and vivid does imagination become, though the body from long mental conflict may be verging to the grave, that, like a creative faculty, it fancies terrifying objects from the deep abyss waiting the moment of a disembodied spirit, to feast their diabolical natures on the huge misery which seems to await him. Only one character in Scripture comes near his condition, or rather what he expects his condition fully to answer in his finish, namely, the Gadarene possessed by a legion. Under such dreadful conflict, the

poor heart has no faith or hope to believe that even such a case as this was not too difficult or great, nor beyond the pity, love, and power of the Son of God. No; he can now only see and judge on the dark side, namely, that before long he shall be a mad and infuriated creature, like the Gadarene, if what he feels and suffers continue much longer. He sees and feels something of the force of this scripture in the Revelation of John, and though spoken of Babylon, it is nevertheless to the letter true concerning himself by nature, as being the habitation of devils, the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of unclean birds. * (Rev. xviii. 2.)

There is also another expression in this book awfully significant of the evil of our nature, namely, the bottomless pit. (Rev. xx. 1, 3.) In such deep waters as the soul is now got into, there is no standing. No idea can be found of the meaning of the word "bottomless." We have a conception, in that it is without bottom; but to be in a state of misery actually to realize something of its meaning by actual experience, is as great a contrast as darkness is to light. None but the Lord can manifest it, for he it is who discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death. (Job xii. 22.) Deep calls unto deep, but nothing can be found. One degree of misery seems to generate another in quick succession, and that another and another, but there is no end. What a difference there is between understanding Scripture in such a way as this and simply reading it in a state of nature, and affixing a natural meaning to it! Thus the convinced sinner seems to struggle and wade in an ocean of misery; and in such a condition what would it give to be able to say, "The things concerning me have an end!" But he cannot.

In such experience, we have a few outlines of what the origin of our sinful nature comprehends through the fall of man, but it is only fully known to Him before whom hell is naked and destruction has no covering. (Job. xxvi. 6.) O, such a state is terrible beyond expression! and yet some of the Lord's people have done business in such deep waters; and such a one is he who now holds his pen, and whilst he writes is enabled to take a lively retrospect of a few incidents of the conflict he has been in, and been graciously brought through. Surely I must say, "He remembered me in my low estate, for his mercy endureth for ever." (Psalm cxxxvi. 23.) What the Saviour must have borne, in agony and torture of spirit, to finish transgression, make an end of sin, and make reconciliation for iniquity, God only can understand. But being very God as well as very man, he not only made satisfactory atonement for the guilt of his church, but also brought in an everlasting righteousness for her. (Dan. xi. 24.)

But the second leading feature under this truth, that all the

* Delta of course does not mean to lay down the whole of this description as a path in which every child of God does or must necessarily walk. He may have known it himself; but to chalk it out as a road which all the redeemed must exactly tread, is warranted by neither Scripture nor experience; nor, from what he says lower down, does it appear that Delta himself thinks so. All the redeemed must, by divine teaching, know sin in its guilt, filth, and misery; and salvation in its sweetness, blessedness, and sufficiency; but God has not defined to what depth or height, and we must not.

Lord's children shall be taught of him, is saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This, too, is the work of God the Spirit. But will God in very deed show mercy to a wretch so vile, so low, so far beyond the reach of all created power, and shut up in unbelief? Yes, he will. And he sustains the guilty soul in the conflict too, till the set time is come. But how and in what way is deliverance wrought? I do not presume to limit the wisdom and sovereignty of God in so glorious a work; but for myself I know that the night preceding my deliverance, my last hold or prop sank under me. I had some days before been tempted to self-destruction; and so dreadful and overwhelming to my feelings was the shock, and so sensible was I that the impulse I felt was from Satanic power, that I fell upon my knees on my face in my bedroom almost petrified, and was for a few moments motionless, lest I should do the deed. But the Lord prevented it; and though after the shock Satan suggested, "I shall have you next time," with something to this effect following it: "You know you are mine;" indeed, I verily thought I was, and expected next time to be his victim. In this condition I agonized before the Lord for deliverance, which words cannot utter, and yet he secretly restrained the power of Satan; for his power was suffered to return no more with such diabolical force and blackness, to my own destruction.

But to return to the Lord's delivering power. I attempted once more to cry unto God from the deep, but it was in silence; words had for some time failed me. I knelt in silence this evening at my dressing-table, and opened my Bible before me, not knowing where or what to read; but as I was ruminating on my miserable and desperate condition, my eye at last settled on the description given of the glories of the happy state of the New Jerusalem, as contained in the Revelation of John. I remember my last lingering desire was, "O that I might but be an inhabitant there!" and with that I shut the book; though I verily thought and believed Satan was quite as likely to have such a wish realized as myself. I must say, I think no soul could feel itself further beyond the reach of mercy while in the body than I, nor deeper shut up in despair. I thought this night, perhaps, would be my last in this world, and that before the morning dawn I should open my eyes "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched," and realize the worst. In this state I lay on my bed, my body under a dangerous disorder, and my spirit equally so. I soon became insensible, and a total consciousness of my condition was absorbed in undisturbed rest till the morning's light. But the moment consciousness was restored to me, when I awoke, these three words, "Who can tell?" fell upon my guilty conscience and the hellish darkness of my mind with such genial influence, and penetrating light, and power—with such a removal or suspension of the mountains of wrath, and guilt, and unbelief that had for months sunk me into most fearful forebodings, that I rose from my bed with these words echoing in my heart: "Who can tell?" as though there had been given me a pair of wings, or that I had left my mortal body

behind me. It was this morning a resurrection from the dead to me indeed! One spiritual ray of light succeeded another, and each one brighter and sweeter than the one preceding it. I knew my sin and guilt had been my misery, and now I began to know what it was to feel the meaning of this truth: "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins." (Acts v. 31.) My heart and spirit, though before as hard as the nether millstone, became gradually softened, sweetly humbled, and as sweetly crumbled to nothing. In proportion, and as gradually as my spirit was set at liberty from the thralldom and power of sin and Satan and the endless forebodings of the endless wrath of God, so in proportion I now began to feel self-examination an easy thing, and repentance a sweet work—no longer a slavish task, as I for months had done, and could get no relief. But now my spiritual vision was anointed to see Him who had bled and suffered, and (I now began to have a lively hope) FOR ME. And in my chamber in prayer I wept tears of joy, and felt holy and solemn delight at the feet of Him unto whom I knew and felt I owed every thing. Though now many miles from the spot, and six and thirty years ago, yet in spirit I feel my tears of joy a second time, when I so poured out my heart unto Christ, and felt indeed a heaven below, in the pardon of my sin and my acceptance in the Beloved. I know the spirit of Mary, who stood at the feet of her Lord behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and to wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with ointment. What a glory shone in this truth about the time I am now recording, namely, "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." (1 Pet. i. 8.) O what I felt under this scripture! What indisputable evidence I had it was the word of God! My joy grew so great, that when alone sometimes I ran for joy; at other times I looked up to the heavens for joy. Now the sun, the moon, the clouds, and the whole face of nature, yea, the waving of the leaves on the trees, all seemed to smile upon me. I entered vitally into this truth: "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." (Isa. lv. 12.)

My bodily health was restored me as by a miracle, as my soul enjoyed pardon and peace; and so powerfully did the Lord make his salvation known, felt, and enjoyed for a season, that I felt without a cumbersome body, and almost all spirit. Nor did the Lord suffer my pure joy to abate until I felt, for a season, as holy as God is holy, as pure as God is pure, and perfect as God is perfect. Indeed, I can say, and that without presumption, under the blessedness and holiness I enjoyed of my first acceptance in the Beloved, that I felt perfectly free and pure from sin, and in wonder looked within, as to what had become of that nest of vipers my bosom had a short time before been the habitation of. I never knew what happiness meant till now. Now I knew the blessedness of

God, and that God is love. Now I knew what it was to be in Christ, and something of what the apostle means when he says, "Whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell," so blessed and happy was his spirit in Christ. O the salvation of God! O the sufferings of the Saviour, when he made a full atonement for sin, and brought in an everlasting righteousness! O how he loved his church, and for the joy set before him in the eternal enjoyment of her and she of him, "he endured the cross, despising the shame." (Heb. xii. 2.) And when we read, God the Father was in Christ reconciling the world of his redeemed unto himself; and as Jesus says, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," what a mystery of love is in our salvation! And what an exceeding and eternal weight of glory must await the church of the redeemed, when he has accomplished the number of his elect; "when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; and God shall be all in all!"

I have in this paper given a few outlines of what I know is couched in our nature from original sin; and connected with it a little of the blessedness of deliverance; and though the latter may be said not to make a part of it, yet the connexion felt so close from the Scripture under consideration, viz., "They shall be all taught of God," that I could not withhold a little on the bright side as well as the dark. In earnest prayer I leave it to the blessing of God on the hearts of his people. Something more upon it yet remains, which, if spared, shall be the subject of another paper.

DELTA.

Manchester, September, 1849.

THE LITTLE CITY BESIEGED AND DELIVERED; OR
THE DELIVERANCE OF THE CHURCH BY CHRIST,
AND THE INGRATITUDE OF MEN TO THE GLO-
RIOUS REDEEMER REPRESENTED.

BY RALPH ERSKINE.

"There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: now, there was found in it a poor wise man; and he, by his wisdom, delivered the city; yet no man remembered the same poor man."—ECCLESIASTES ix. 14, 15.

(Concluded from page 68.)

IV. The fourth general head proposed was, *To speak of the ingratitude of the citizens, their proneness to forget their deliverer:* "Yet no man remembered the same poor man." This is the sin that God has challenged in his church many times: "Of the rock that begat thee thou hast been unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee." (Deut. xxxii. 18.) "They forgot God their Saviour, who had done great things in Egypt; they soon forgot his works." (Psalm cvi. 13. 21.)

I might here speak a little to these four things: 1. Of the nature of their unmindfulness or forgetfulness; 2. The object thereof: they forgot the "poor wise man" and his work; 3. The universality of

this oblivion: "No man remembered the same poor man;" 4. The reason of this forgetfulness.

1. We are first to view the *nature* of this oblivion. For understanding thereof you must know that forgetfulness of Christ is either total or partial. A *total* forgetfulness takes place in the wicked, of whom it is said, "God is not in all their thoughts." A *partial* forgetfulness is incident to believers themselves, who may, in a great measure, forget what God hath done to their souls. *Actual* forgetfulness is what the godly may be guilty of, as David after his gross sin of idolatry, when he was contriving the murder of Uriah. But there is an *habitual* forgetfulness, peculiar to the wicked, who desire not the knowledge of God, and never remember God till they be driven to it with a vengeance, as it is said of these, "When he slew them, then they sought him; they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their Redeemer." They never remember till God brings a mortal stroke. But now, this forgetfulness imports the want of a spiritual view and discovery of God; and the want of that lively impression of him which the right view of him doth require. We cannot rightly remember God, if we see not his perfections shining in his works, as David did, when he says of God's works, "In wisdom hast thou made them all." When we see the wisdom and power, and other attributes of God, shining in his works, particularly in his delivering the little city the church, then, and not till then, do we rightly remember them; and when we see that his great end in all is the glory of these perfections, and entertain due impressions hereof so as to remember not only in a speculative, but in a practical and appropriating manner; and when we remember his delivering us, in particular, from the power and policy of the great kings that were against us, and render to him the praise due to his name.

2. The *Object* of this forgetfulness: "No man remembered the same poor wise man." We are apt, and naturally prone to forget our Creator, to forget our Redeemer, and Saviour, and Protector, and Benefactor, our best Friend. We forget the Deliverer himself, the poor wise man found in the city. We forget his humanity, that he is a man; his divinity, that he is God; his humiliation and poverty, that for our sakes he became poor; and his destination to this redemption-work; all is forgotten. We forget all the deliverances he hath wrought, the redemption he hath accomplished. We forget his works of creation, though yet "the heavens declare his glory." We forget his works of providence; both prosperous and adverse, both ordinary and extraordinary, as Israel did, of whom it is said, "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked: he forsook God that made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation." They forgot the plagues of Egypt; the drowning of the Egyptians; the solemn appearance of God on Sinai, when the hill trembled under the weight of God, and the flames ascended to the middle heaven. We forget his work of redemption. He redeems from the fury of justice, the curse of the law, the bondage of sin, the slavery of Satan, the sting

of death; from the wrath of God, that terrible wrath, that intolerable wrath, that interminable wrath, that ever-coming wrath; he "delivers from the wrath to come," and yet we are apt to forget the Deliverer and the deliverance. We forget this redemption, and the necessity of it, the sufficiency of it, the excellency of it, the efficacy of it, the fulness of it, the acceptableness of it; all is forgotten. We forget also his work of regeneration, the work of conviction, and humiliation; the work of conversion, and sanctification. Though this work of grace effectuates a real change, a sensible change, a universal change; yet all may be forgotten, insomuch that we may ask the believer himself, Have you a regeneration frame, the same temper of spirit you had in the day of believing? "Where is the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals?" Yea, communications, and manifestations, and common experiences, may all be fearfully forgotten,

3. The *universality* of this oblivion: "NO MAN remembered the same poor man." That this unbelieving forgetfulness of Christ, the Redeemer, is universal, appears evident from two arguments.

First, From the *instances* of all ages of the world. The first man that ever was began his apostasy from God by his sin; he forgot the favour of God in giving him such an excellent being, and such excellent benefits; forgot the covenant that God entered into with him, forbidding him to eat of the tree that was in the midst of the garden upon peril of eternal ruin to himself and his posterity; yet the subtlety of the serpent drove all out of his mind. How quickly did Noah forget the great deliverance from the deluge, when all the rest of the world was overwhelmed in the midst of the waters! he was no sooner saved from water than he was drowned in wine. How quickly did Lot forget the deliverance from the flames of Sodom, and fall into the fire of lust! Solomon forgot the God that appeared unto him thrice, and turned unto idolatry. David quickly forgot the Lord's delivering him from Saul, and fell into the sin of adultery and murder. Israel forgot God and all his works of wonder. The ten lepers, all but one, forgot to return and give praise to God that healed them. The disciples of Christ quickly forgot the miracles of the loaves; they got sweet communion with Christ, yet Judas and his party soon drove all out of their minds. "No man remembered the poor wise man."

Secondly, It appears from the many *remembrances* and *memorials* that the Lord Jesus has set up for himself, and his works, as preservative against this forgetting of him. God's works of creation are his remembrancers, while "the heavens declare his glory." God's works of providence are his remembrancers. "He hath not left himself without a witness," even among the heathen, giving them rain and fruitful seasons: every drop of rain is a memorial of God. God's ordinances are his remembrancers; why has he given us sabbaths and sacraments, but to be memorials of the work of Christ and the death of Christ? "Do this in remembrance of me." In a word, the Holy Ghost is given to be a Remembrancer: "I will give the Comforter, and he shall bring all things to your remembrance." (John

xiv. 26.) I have been long preaching amongst you, might Christ say, and given you many a sermon; but all is gone, you have forgotten all; therefore, I will send the Holy Ghost to be your Remembrancer. These things evidence the universality of this sin: "No man remembered the poor wise man." Now consider here,

4. The *reason* of this forgetfulness. And there are these four reasons we shall assign for it.

First, It flows from the *universal depravation* of our nature: the memory, with all the rest of the faculties of the soul, got a dash by the fall of Adam; our heads were dashed to pieces when we fell from such a height of happiness to such a depth of misery.

Secondly, It flows from the *little esteem and value* that people have for the poor wise Man, and his great works of redeeming and delivering us. It is strange to think how much the works of men will be admired, and the works of God slighted. If a physician shall perform a cure upon a man that is desperately diseased and dangerously ill, the man will be more taken up with the physician's work than with God's work; he will pay his physician, but never thank his God. Many will read the works of men with admiration, and read history with rapture; but they will read the history of the life and death of Christ without ever being moved.

Thirdly, It flows from this: that *the memory is stuffed with other things*, even with the trash of hell; there is no room for Christ and his works of wonder. It was a base treatment of Christ when he was sent out to the stable, laid in a manger, no room for him in the inn. But it is a thousand times worse, when your heart is so full of the world, lusts, and idols, that there is no room for Christ.

Fourthly, It flows from the *little impression that Christ and his redeeming work makes upon us*. Naturalists give this as a reason of remembrance, when a thing makes a mighty impression on the brain. But, alas! the works of God flee over our heads like a shadow, and so are forgotten. The best thing for the memory is the Spirit of God coming with life and power to the soul. "I will never forget thy words," says David; why? "for by them thou hast quickened me." It left an impression, and therefore abode. When the word of God, the works of God, have no impression, no wonder they are soon forgotten; there is a fowl of the air, the "prince of the power of the air," the devil, he picks away everything you hear, if your hearts be not closets for Christ. If he were your treasure, your hearts would be the cabinets: "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

V. The fifth and last thing proposed was, The *application* of the subject. And this we shall essay in a use of information, lamentation, trial, and exhortation.

We are, first, to deduce some inferences for *information*. Is it so, as has been said? Hence see,

1. The *despicable case* of the church of God in this world; it is but like a little city, and a few men in it. It is a despised city. The world calls it an outcast, saying, "This is Zion, whom no man

seeks after." (Jer. xxx. 17.) As Christ was despised and rejected of men, so are his friends and followers: they are a little flock, and a despised flock. Whatever be the state of the church visible; sometimes when it appears "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners;" and when her visible glory, the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, is not defaced; yet the church invisible, in this world, is, for ordinary, a poor, small, despised company: "I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord."

2. Hence see the *dangerous circumstance* of the church of God in this world. It is a city "besieged by a great king," building "great bulwarks" against it. The church is like a bush burning in the midst of the flames; it is in a dangerous militant state. The church of God is the "man-child," which the red dragon stands ready to devour as soon as it is born. (Rev. xii. 4.) What a helpless case is the church of God in, in outward appearance! A "great city" cannot stand out well against a "great king" and "great bulwarks;" far less a "little city," and "few men within it."

3. Hence see the *marvellous grace* of God in finding out a Saviour, and a great one, to save the little city; and behold "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was great and rich, yet for our sakes he became poor;" and in the capacity of a poor man, though yet infinitely wise, being God as well as man, he delivered the city, and raised the siege. O see and admire his wisdom, by which he delivered the city!

4. Hence see the *matchless ingratitude* of the visible church, where such a great deliverance is wrought; that "no man" should remember the poor wise Man; that they should be guilty of such universal oblivion. Unbelief discovers itself by unmindfulness. The life of faith is a life of spiritual remembrance; but unbelief appears by forgetfulness; by faith we remember Christ, but by unbelief we forget him, and all his acts of kindness and love, though a standing ministry be appointed to help our memory; and O what a horrid ingratitude is it to forget him that minded us! Forgetfulness is the spring of that deluge of atheism and wickedness that overruns the world and the present generation; people forget God and Christ. If men did but remember there is a God in heaven, that notices what they do, they could not practise as they do: men have their minds so sunk in a present world, that they mind no other world; they forget Him that came to "redeem from this present evil world," and to provide a better. While we mind only earthly things we neglect the great salvation, and the great Saviour and Deliverer.

5. Hence see what is here inferred, ver. 16, that "wisdom is better than strength." Christ is frequently here, and in the Proverbs, represented under the name of "Wisdom." And surely the wisdom of Christ is better than the strength of man; better than the strength of carnal policy; better than the strength of human reason; better than the strength of armies. Yet the poor Man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard. Christ is despised, and his gospel neglected and rejected.

A LETTER FROM JOHN KNOX, THE GREAT SCOTCH REFORMER, TO HIS MOTHER-IN-LAW, MRS. BOWES.

[THE following letter, from John Knox to his mother-in-law, was published for the first time by M'Crie, in his *Life of that reformer*. In M'Crie's work, however, it is published in the original Scotch, but we have modernised the language and spelling for the convenience of the great bulk of readers. As it may, however, gratify some to see the exact language in which John Knox wrote, we have subjoined the two first sentences at the bottom of the page.*

There are several other letters by Knox, published for the first time by M'Crie, and therefore little known, which we may insert as opportunity offers.]

Right dearly beloved Mother in our Saviour Jesus Christ,—When I call to mind and revolve within myself the troubles and afflictions of God's elect from the beginning, (in which I do not forget you,) there are within my heart two contrary extremes—a grief almost unspeakable, and a joy and comfort which by man's senses cannot be comprehended nor understood. The chief causes of grief are two; the one is the remembrance of sin, which I daily feel remaining in this corrupt nature, which was and is so odious and detestable in the sight of our heavenly Father, that by no other sacrifice could or might the same be purged, except by the blood and death of the only innocent Son of God. When I deeply do consider the cause of Christ's death to have been *sin*, and sin yet to dwell in all flesh, I am compelled to sob and groan as a man under a heavy burden; yea, and sometimes to cry, "O wretched and miserable man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of sin?"

The other cause of my grief is, that such as would most gladly remain together for the mutual comfort of each other are not permitted so to do.

Since the first day that it pleased the providence of God to bring you and me acquainted, I have always delighted in your company; and, when my labours would permit, you know I have not spared hours to talk and commune with you, the fruit of which I did not then fully understand nor perceive. But now, being absent, and so absent that by bodily presence neither of us can receive comfort from the other, I call to mind how that often, when with mournful hearts we have begun our talk, God hath sent great comfort unto us both, which now for my own part I usually want. The opening of your troubles and acknowledging of your infirmity was first unto me a

* "Rycht deirlibelovet mother in oure saviour Jesus Chryst,—when I call to mynd and revolve with myself the trubillis and afflictionis of Godis elect from the beginning, (in which I do not forget yow,) their is within my hart two extreme contrareis; a dolour almaist unspeakabill, and a joy and comfort whilk, be maunis sences, can not be comprehendit nor understand. The chief causis of dolour be two; the ane is the remembrance of syn, whilk I daylie feill remanyng in this corrupt nature, whilk was and is sa odius and detestabill in the presence of oure hevenlic father, that be na uther sacrifice euld or myght the same be purgeit, except by the blude and death of the onlie innocent sone of God."

very mirror and glass, wherein I felt myself so rightly painted forth, that nothing could be more evident to my own eyes. And then, the searching of the Scriptures for God's sweet promises, and for his mercies freely given unto miserable offenders, (for his nature delighteth to show mercy where most misery reigneth,)—the collection and applying of God's mercies, I say, were unto me as the breaking and handling with my own hands the most sweet and delectable unguents, whereof I could not but receive some comfort by their sweet odours. But now, though I never lack the presence and plain image of my own wretched infirmity, yet, seeing sin so manifestly abound in all estates, I am compelled to thunder out the threatenings of God against the obstinate rebels, in doing whereof (although, as God knoweth, I am no malicious or obstinate sinner) I sometimes am wounded, knowing myself criminal and guilty in many, yea, in all things, (malicious obstinacy laid aside,) that in others I reprehend. Judge not, mother, that I write these things debasing myself otherwise than I am; no; I am worse than I express. In body ye think I am no adulterer; let it be so; but the heart is infected with foul lusts, and will lust, although I lament never so much. Externally I commit no idolatry; but my wicked heart lusteth, and cannot be refrained from vain imaginations, yea, not from such as were the fountain of all idolatry. I am no man-killer with my hands; but I help not my needy brother as liberally as I may and ought. I steal not horse, money, nor clothes from my neighbour, but that small portion of worldly substance I bestow not so rightly as his holy law requireth. I bear no false witness against my neighbour, in judgment or otherwise before men; but I speak not the truth of God so boldly as it becometh his true messenger to do. And thus, in conclusion, there is no vice repugnant to God's holy will expressed in his law wherewith my heart is not infected.

Thus much was written and dated before the receipt of your letters, which I received the 21st of June. They were unto my heart some comfort for divers causes not necessary to be rehearsed, but most (as knoweth God) for that I find a congruence betwixt us in spirit, being so far distant in body. For when that deliberately I did consult with your letter, I did consider that I myself was complaining even of the selfsame things at that very moment that I received it. By my pen from a sorrowful heart I could not but burst forth and say, "O Lord, how wonderful are thy works! how dost thou try and prove thy chosen children as gold by the fire! how canst thou in manner hide thy face from thy own spouse, that thy presence after may be more delectable! How canst thou bring thy saints low, that thou mayst carry them to glory everlasting! How canst thou suffer thy strong faithful messengers in many things yet to wrestle with wretched infirmity and feeble weakness, yea, and sometimes permittest thou them horribly to fall, partly that no flesh shall have whereof it may glory before thee, and partly that others of small estate and meaner gifts in thy church might receive some consolation; albeit, they find in themselves wicked motions, which they are not able to expel!" My purpose was, before I received your letter, to have exhorted you

to patience, and to firm adhering to God's promises, although that your flesh, the devil, and other your enemies, would persuade to the contrary; for, by the arts and subtleties that the adversary useth against me, I not only do conjecture, but also plainly do see your assaults and trouble. And so, likewise, in the bowels of Christ's mercy most earnestly I beseech you by that infirmity that ye know remaineth in me (worse I am than I can write) patiently to endure; albeit that ye have not such perfection as ye would; and albeit also your motions* be such as be most vile and abominable, yet not to sorrow above measure. If I to whom God has given greater gifts, (I write to his praise,) be yet so wrapped in misery, that what I would I cannot do, and what I would not, that, with St. Paul I say, daily, yea, every hour and moment I devise to do, and in my heart fight I never so fast to the contrary, I perform and do—if such wretched wickedness remain in God's chief ministers, what wonder albeit the same remain in you? If God's strongest men of war be beaten back in their face, that what they would they cannot destroy nor kill, is it any such offence† to you to be tossed as you complain, that, therefore, ye should distrust God's free promises? God forbid, dear mother! The power of God is known by our weakness, and these griefs and infirmities be most profitable to us, for by the same is our pride beaten down, which is not easy otherwise to be done. By them are our miseries known, so that we, acknowledging ourselves full of disease, seek the Physician. By them come we, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, to the hatred of sin; and by them come we to the hunger and thirst after righteousness; and to desire to be dissolved, and so to reign with our Christ Jesus, which, without this battle and sorrow, this flesh could never do. And so from the griefs I proceed to the comfort.

As the causes of grief be two, which are present sin, and the lack of such company as in whom we most could delight, so is the cause of my comfort not imagined of my brain, but pronounced first by God, and after grafted in the hearts of God's children by his Holy Spirit. They are likewise two; *first*, a righteousness inviolable offered in the flesh before the throne of our heavenly Father, and *secondly*, an assured hope of that general assembly and gathering of God's dispersed flock, in that day "when all tears shall be wiped from our eyes," when death shall be vanquished, and may never sever such as, fearing God this day in the flesh, mourn under the burden of sin.

Of our present righteousness, notwithstanding sin remain in our bodies, are we assured by the faithful witness of Jesus Christ, John the apostle, saying, "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." Mark the words of the apostle: "If we confess our sins," God must forgive them, because "he is faithful and just." To confession of sins are these things requisite: *First*, We must acknowledge the sin. And it is to be noted, that sometimes God's very elect, albeit they have sinned most heinously, do not ac-

* By "motions" Knox means the inward workings of our corrupt nature.

† Stumbling-block, insurmountable difficulty.

knowledge sin, and therefore cannot at all times confess the same; for sin is not known until such time as the veil is taken from the conscience of the offender, that he may see and behold the filthiness of sin, and what punishment by God's judgments is due for the same. And then (which is the *second* thing requisite to confession) begins the hatred of sin and of ourselves, for contemning of God and of his holy law, whereof last springs that which we call hope of mercy, which is nothing else but a sob from a troubled heart, confounded and ashamed for sin, thirsting after remission and God's free mercy; whereupon of necessity must follow this conclusion, God has remitted and freely forgiven the sin, and why? "For he is faithful and just," saith the apostle. Comfortable and marvellous causes! First, God is faithful, therefore he must forgive sin. A comfortable consequent, on a most sure ground! for God's faithfulness can no more fail than he himself. Then let this argument be gathered for our comfort; the office of the faithful is to keep promise; but God is faithful, therefore, he must keep promise. That God has promised remission of sins to such as be repentant, I need not now recite the places. But let this collection of the promises be made; God promises remission of sins to all that confess the same; but I confess my sins, for I see the filthiness thereof, and how justly God may condemn me for my iniquities; I sob and lament for that I cannot be quit and rid of sin; I desire to lead a more perfect life. These are infallible signs, seals, and tokens that God has remitted the sin, for God "is faithful," that so has promised, and can more deceive than can cease to be God. But what reason is this, "God is just," therefore he must forgive sin. A wondrous cause and reason indeed! For the flesh and natural man can understand nothing but the contrary, for thus must it reason: the justice of God is offended by my sins, so God must needs have a satisfaction, and require a punishment. If we understand of whom God requires satisfaction, whether of us or of the hands of his only Son, and whose punishment is able to recompense our sins, then shall we have great cause to rejoice, remembering that God is a just God, for the office of the just man is to stand content when he has received his duty. But God has received already at the hands of his only Son all that is due for our sins, and so cannot his justice require nor crave any more of us either satisfaction or recompense for our sins. Consider, mother, the sure pillars and foundations of our salvation to be God's faithfulness and justice. He that is faithful has promised free remission to all penitent sinners, and he that is just has received already a full satisfaction for the sins of all those that embrace Christ Jesus to be the only Saviour. What rests, then, to us to be done? Nothing but to acknowledge our misery and wretchedness, which no flesh can do so unfeignedly as they that daily feel the weight of sin.

Mother, cause have we none for desperation, albeit the devil rage never so cruelly, and albeit the flesh be never so frail, daily and hourly lusting against God's holy commandments, yea, striving against the same. This is not the time of righteousness before our own eyes, we look for that which is promised, the kingdom everlasting

prepared to us from the beginning, whereof we are made heirs by God's appointment, legitimated * thereto by Christ's death, to whom we shall be gathered, when after we shall never depart, which to remember is my singular comfort, but thereof now I cannot write. I commit you to the protection of the Omnipotent.

Your son unfeigned,

JOHN KNOX.

At London, the 23rd of June, 1553.

A LETTER BY THE LATE J. M'KENZIE.

My dear Friend,—By this time I fear you will think I have used you very ill in not answering your kind and welcome letter before this. Apologies seldom compensate for disappointment; but my apology is ill health, my hands full, and being from home; and be assured it is not from disrespect or indifference to you.

I was glad to hear you had a little refreshing by the way in reading some pieces in the "Standard." It has, I believe, been made a blessing more or less to many, notwithstanding its many infirmities and mistakes, and all the opposition which it has met with.

I understand your trials and experience well. I have passed through it again and again, both to my sorrow and my joy; and to this day I find myself a poor guilty, blind, ignorant, helpless sinner, unworthy of the smallest mercy, and unable of myself to perform the least spiritual act. But Jesus is tender and long-suffering, and very gracious to me, notwithstanding my vile ness. I had a sweet view of my Lord as "Lord of All," from Hebrews i. 2, 3, on Lord's day, and I preached from it on Lord's day evening. "He is truly both Lord and Christ, and Head over all things to the church;" and my soul desires a greater, a clearer knowledge of him in all his personal and mediatorial glory, and a stronger and more sensible faith and assurance in him, and a more frequent and close communion with him. This is what I desire, but not what I always enjoy. The carnal workings of sinful thoughts, a worldly spirit, and coldness and deadness of heart, are too often the evil weeds of my depraved nature. But one sweet visit from Jesus sets all right.

I am, yours sincerely and affectionately,

J. M'KENZIE.

Preston, March 23rd, 1847.

Stoop, stoop; it is a low entry to go in at heaven's gates. There is infinite justice in the party you have to do with; it is his nature not to acquit the guilty and the sinner. The law of God will not remit one farthing of the sinner. God forgetteth not both the Surety and the sinner; and every man must pay, either in his own person (the Lord save you from that payment) or in his Surety, Christ.—*Rutherford.*

* Having a legitimate title.

AS MANY AS I LOVE I REBUKE AND CHASTEN.

My Dear ——,—I return you my hearty thanks for your kind note and its contents, received by Mr. N., who is a very kind and friendly man, and contributed both on this and a former occasion to our relief. This I assure you, my friend, was very seasonable, we being at the time very nearly run out. O how wonderfully have I seen the kind hand of my heavenly Father move towards me since I have been shut up in this weak state! The various ways in which he has sent relief, and the wonderful timely appearances from the most unlikely means, one would reasonably think would for ever stop the mouth of unbelief and murmuring, if any thing would. But, alas! I find I am still the same in my corrupt nature as ever, though I am ashamed to speak it out. And I am for ever putting an *if* upon his almighty power and willingness. I think at times I can trust him more for my soul than for my body, although he has never failed to supply me in the time of real need to this day. Bless his dear name for all his mercies granted me.

I do not know why I have written thus, unless you are a little like myself, apt to fear. If so, I would say, Fear not, dear sister, we have a covenant God in Christ to take care of us and provide for us all things that shall be for his own declarative glory and our good. He has appointed all things for us; fixed the bounds of our habitation, appointed every trial and affliction that shall visit us in this world. As a Father, he chastens us for our good; not because he hateth us, but because he loveth us. "As many as he loves he rebukes and chastens, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." (See Hebrews xii.) Only bastards are spared; they only are without chastisement. The Lord chastens us that we may be partakers of his holiness. So whatever the Lord may withhold from us, it shall work among the "all things" for our good in the end; be assured of it, for Truth hath declared it. O that you and I may be enabled to commit all our concerns to his hand, and leave them there!

If you, my dear friend, could leave your soul and body in his hands, also your dear partner in life and children, together with all your worldly concerns, how happy a life would a life of faith and dependence be! This we are exhorted to: "Be careful for nothing, but in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." And says the apostle, "All your needs shall be supplied, according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus." But how we need the gracious help and influence of God the Holy Ghost, to work in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure; to lead us out of self, and to mortify our corrupt members, especially unbelief, which when it gains an ascendancy in us leads us captive! The Spirit alone can arm faith to fight and overcome this prevailing sin that so easily besets us; indeed, my friend, we shall never be able to overcome one sin but by the faith of Christ. It is only by looking with the eye of faith to the victory Christ has obtained in our name and nature that we overcome: "Who

is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth on the Son of God?"

May the dear Lord bless and comfort you, and strengthen your body, if his blessed will! My prayer has been for you.

I desire to bless the Lord for his kind care over Mr. W. in preserving him both by sea and land; he is well kept in Jehovah's hand. There nothing will befall him unless the Lord has pre-appointed it, and then it shall be all for the best.

"All my times are in thy hand;
All events at thy command."

My wife joins in love to you, wishing you a happy new year in the best sense of the word.

I remain, your soul's well wisher,

J. M.

EXTRACT FROM LUTHER'S "DE SERVO ARBITRIO,"
OR "THE SLAVERY OF THE WILL."*

Few men ever carried the doctrine of predestination to greater lengths, or wrote more positively in defence of it, than Luther, as the following extracts will sufficiently witness. Erasmus, in a work which he had written against the doctrine of predestination, had said, "What can be more useless than to publish this paradox to the world? namely, that whatever we do is done, not by virtue of our own free will, but in a way of necessity, &c. What a wide gap does the publication of this tenet open among men for the commission of all ungodliness! What wicked person will reform his life? Who will dare to believe himself a favourite of heaven? Who will fight against his own corrupt inclinations? Therefore, where is either the need or utility of spreading these notions, from which so many evils flow?"

To which Luther replied, "If, Erasmus, you consider these paradoxes, as you term them, to be no more than the inventions of men, why are you so extravagantly hot on the occasion? In that case your argument affects not me; for there is no person now living in the world who is a more avowed enemy to the doctrines of men than myself. But if you believe the doctrines in debate between us to be, as indeed they are, the doctrines of God, you must have bid adieu to all sense of shame and decency thus to oppose them. I will not ask, Where is the modesty of Erasmus fled? But, which is much more important, Where, alas! are your fear and reverence of the Deity, when you roundly declare that this branch of truth which he has revealed from heaven, is at best useless and unnecessary to be known? What! shall the glorious Creator be taught by you, his

* Erasmus wrote a work which he entitled, "*De Libero Arbitrio*," i.e., "On the Liberty of the Will;" his object being to show that the will of man in a state of nature was free to choose the ways of God. Luther answered it in a work which he entitled, "*De Servo Arbitrio*," or, "On the Slavery of the Will;" proving that through the fall the will of man is enslaved to unbelief and sin. This work is generally considered Luther's masterpiece.

creature, what is fit to be preached, and what suppressed? Is the adorable God so very defective in wisdom and prudence as not to know, till you instruct him, what would be useful and what pernicious? Or could not He whose understanding is infinite, foresee previous to his revelation of this doctrine, what would be the consequences of revealing it, till those consequences are pointed out by you? You cannot, you dare not say this. If, then, it was the divine pleasure to make known these things in his word, and to bid his messengers publish them abroad, and leave the consequences of their so doing to the wisdom and providence of Him in whose name they speak and whose message they declare, 'Who art thou, Erasmus, that thou shouldst reply against God, and say to the Almighty, What doest thou?' St. Paul, discoursing of God, declares peremptorily, 'Whom he will he hardeneth;' and again, 'God, willing to show his wrath,' &c. The apostle did not write this to have it stifled among a few persons, and buried in a corner; but wrote it to the Christians at Rome, which was in effect bringing this doctrine upon the stage of the whole world, stamping a universal imprimature upon it, and publishing it to believers at large throughout the earth. What can sound harsher in the uncircumcised ears of carnal men than those words of Christ: 'Many are called, but few are chosen;' and 'I know whom I have chosen.' Now, these and similar assertions of Christ and his apostles, are the very positions which you brand as useless and hurtful. You say, If these things are so, who will endeavour to amend his life? I answer, Without the Holy Ghost, no man can amend his life to any purpose. Reformation is but varnished hypocrisy, unless it proceed from grace. The elect are amended by the Spirit of God, and those of mankind who are not amended by him will perish. You ask, moreover, Who will dare to believe himself a favourite of heaven? I answer, It is not in man's own power to believe himself such, upon just grounds, till he is enabled from above. But the elect shall be so enabled; they shall believe themselves to be what indeed they are; as for the rest, who are not endued with faith, they shall be damned, raging and blaspheming as you do now. But say you, These doctrines open a door to ungodliness. I answer, Whatever door they may open to the impious and profane, yet they open a door of righteousness to the elect and holy, and show them the way to heaven, and the path of access to God. Yet you would have us abstain from the mention of these grand doctrines, and leave the people in the dark as to the election of God; the consequence of which would be, that every man would bolster himself up with a delusive hope of a share in that salvation which is supposed to lie open to all; and thus genuine humility and the fear of God would be kicked out of doors. This would be a pretty way indeed of stopping up the gap Erasmus complains of. Instead of closing up the door of licentiousness, as is falsely pretended, it would be, in fact, opening a gulph into the nethermost hell. Still you urge, Where is either the necessity or utility of preaching predestination? God himself teaches it, and commands us to teach it; and that is answer enough. We are not to

arraign the Deity, and bring the motives of his will to the test of human scrutiny, but simply to revere both him and it. He who alone is all-wise and all-just can in reality, however things appear to us, do wrong to no man; neither can he do any thing unwisely or rashly; and this consideration will suffice to silence all the objections of true godly persons. Moreover, let us for argument sake go a step farther. I will venture to assign, over and above, two very important reasons why those doctrines should be publicly taught.

“First. *For the humbling of our pride, and the manifestation of divine grace.* God hath assuredly promised his favour to the truly humble. By the truly humble I mean those who are endued with repentance, and despair of saving themselves. For a man can never be said to be really penitent and humble until he is made to know that his salvation is not suspended, in any measure whatever, on his own strength, machinations, endeavours, free-will, or works; but entirely depends on the free pleasure, purpose, determination, and efficiency of another, even God alone. Whilst a man is persuaded that he has it in his power to contribute any thing, be it ever so little, to his own salvation, he remains in carnal confidence; he is not a self-despairer, and therefore not duly humbled before God: so far from it, that he hopes some favourable juncture or opportunity will offer when he may be able to lend a helping hand to the business of his salvation. On the contrary, whoever is truly convinced that the whole work depends singly and absolutely on the will of God, who alone is the Author and Finisher of salvation, such a person despairs of all self-assistance. He renounces his own will and his own strength; he waits and prays for the operation of God, nor waits and prays in vain. For the elect’s sake these doctrines, therefore, are to be preached, that the chosen of God being humbled by the knowledge of his truth, self-emptied, and sunk, as it were, into nothing in his presence, may be saved in Christ with eternal glory. This, then, is one inducement to the publishing of these doctrines; that the penitent may be made acquainted with the promise of grace, plead it in prayer before God, and receive it as their own.

“Secondly. *The nature of the Christian faith requires it.* Faith has to do with things not seen; and this is one of the highest degrees of faith, steadfastly to believe that God is infinitely merciful, though he saves comparatively but few and condemns so many; and that he is strictly just, though of his own will he makes such numbers of mankind necessarily liable to damnation. Now these are some of the unseen things whereof faith is the evidence: whereas, were it in my power to comprehend them, or clearly to make out how God is both inviolably just and infinitely merciful, notwithstanding the display of wrath and seeming inequality in his dispensations respecting the reprobate, faith would have little or nothing to do. But now, since matters cannot be adequately comprehended by us, in the present state of imperfection, there is room for the exercise of faith. The truths, therefore, respecting predestination in all its branches should be taught and published: they, no less than the other mysteries of Christian doctrine, being proper objects of faith on the part of God’s people.”

SORROW AND COMFORT; OR, CONFLICTS AND TRIUMPHS THE COMMON LOT OF ALL REAL BELIEVERS.

BY JOHN RUSK.

"The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy."—Prov. xiv. 10.

(Continued from page 50.)

6. Another cause of bitterness, and keenly felt by those that love Zion, is—*when the church of God appears to be in danger*, and its enemies to gain ground on it, and threaten its destruction. If you and I really are friends to the church of God as a body, we shall be concerned when any thing like this seems to be coming on. We shall not be Gallio-like, and care for none of these things. "O," say some, "it never troubles me; God has decreed every thing, and there is no chance; and this strong faith which I have in God's decrees keeps me, so that I am troubled at nothing, neither do I lay any thing to heart." If this is your case, it certainly is carelessness and presumption, and not a real trust in the Lord; for if it were, it would agree with the experience of Bible saints. See Hezekiah, when the enemy threatened his ruin. How distressed was he, fearing total destruction, and sending to his friends to entreat the Lord! Again, look and see the danger threatened against all the Jews by that child of the devil, Haman, and the craft that he used. Was Esther, although the queen, easy about it? Did she rest satisfied that she was safe, and that was enough? O no! she was greatly concerned, and ventured her life in behalf of her people. And Mordecai, how was it with him? Was he careless? Did he say, "God will do as he pleases; it is all fixed?" O no; hear what he said, and how he felt it: "When Mordecai perceived all that was done, he rent his clothes and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and bitter cry;" which bitter cry came from his heart. "The heart knoweth his own bitterness."

And are we not, readers, in danger at this time in our guilty land and nation? Do not popery and infidelity gain ground, and iniquities, both in old and young, run down our streets like a mighty stream? And if we look at those that profess the truth, how few there are, comparatively, that in heart love the truth! No; as a professing people we are dwindled away into a mere form. Even among real saints, what coldness and indifference! Now, does not all this call aloud for a purging time? Truly it does, and is the cause of grief, sorrow, and bitterness to a few.

7. Another cause of bitterness of heart is, *when God hides his face from us, and lets us have a discovery of our evil and corrupt hearts*. You may see this in Hezekiah. It is said that the Lord left him, that he might know all that was in his heart. Bitterness is one thing that he felt, and is one of the evils of our nature. Hence Paul says, "Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and

clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice." (Eph. iv. 31.) If such things were not in the heart of a real believer, there would be no propriety in exhorting believers, or cautioning them against such things. No, my friend, you and I have every evil in our nature still, although partakers of grace. James brings it in also; hence he says, "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not." (iii. 14.) But say you, "I always thought that a man truly converted to God had a complete change made, that old things passed away, and that all things became new; and does not John say, 'He that is born of God sinneth not?'" To this I answer, that you must look at a child of God, when you read such texts, only in his new nature, and there it will stand good; also viewing him in Christ Jesus, there also it stands good. But he sometimes puts off this new man, and puts on the old, and then you will find that he has bitterness, with every other evil. Yes, and when he is not manifestively in Christ it is the same; for the old man is put on. Hence Christ says so often, "Abide in me." Hezekiah found this bitterness, as it is written, "Behold, for peace," or, as it might be read, "Upon my peace, came great bitterness; but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption, for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." Thus when God hides his blessed face, we soon find a change, and a miserable one it is; not that all bitterness arises from corrupt nature; no; this would not stand as truth if it were advanced. Yet I really think that Hezekiah's did, because he adds that God delivered him from the pit of corruption;* and it also answers to God's teaching him to know all that was in his heart. "The heart knoweth his own bitterness."

8. There is a bitterness felt in the heart, arising from the new man as well as the old, and that is, a *holy indignation against ourselves on account of sin*; and particularly so, when the Lord is pleased to look upon us, as he did upon poor Peter. O! that look of love, pity, and compassion broke Peter's heart. There was nothing said. The Saviour did not say, "Why, Peter, how could you tell such a lie, to say that you did not know me, after saying that you would lay down your life for my sake? Then to deny me with oaths and curses!" O no; our Lord was too tender to speak at this rate. He only

* The "bitterness" felt by Hezekiah seems rather to have arisen from the guilt of unpardoned sin on his conscience; and "the pit of corruption" from which God delivered him was rather the pit of *destruction*, as the word signifies, that is, hell, than the pit of his own heart. "The pit," in Scripture, generally, if not universally, signifies the pit of hell: "Be not silent to me; lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit." (Ps. xxviii. 1.) "Let not the pit shut her mouth upon me." (lxxix. 15.) "I am counted with them that go down into the pit." (lxxxviii. 4.) Jonah also says, "Thou hast brought up my life from corruption," (Jonah ii. 6,) or destruction—not the corruptions of his own heart, for they fearfully broke out again, but from the destruction of his body in the whale's belly, and the destruction of his soul in hell for ever. Nor was Hezekiah delivered from the pit of his own corruptions, for in the very next chapter he manifested his pride in such a way as to call down the reproof of God; but he was delivered from the fear of hell by the pardoning love of God shed abroad in his heart.

looked on him with a look of love: "And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter, and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice; and Peter went out and wept bitterly." (Luke xxii. 62.) I believe it is much such a feeling as this that Zechariah speaks of, when he says, "They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn, and be in bitterness of soul for him as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." (xii. 10.) Sins discovered in the sufferings of Christ are keenly felt; then we consider, as the hymn says, that it was *our* sins:

"Yes, my sins have done the deed."

"They nail'd him to the accursed tree,
They did, my brethren, so did we."

Yes, and the same accursed poison is still in us. O how vile we are! and what love doth Christ manifest to us! "The heart knoweth his own bitterness." This is painful indeed to feel.

9. Another cause of much bitterness of heart is *the venomous tongues of the wicked*, when God suffers them to persecute the righteous. The true church of God ever will be hated by Satan. Hence we find that God told Satan, (Gen. iii. 15,) "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." Hence David says; "If the Lord had not been on our side, now may Israel say, If the Lord had not been on our side when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us." The tongue is an unruly member in us all, especially when men are suffered to reproach and persecute the saints. But it may be asked why all this is permitted? I answer, To keep you and me from a carnal, light, and trifling spirit, and from a mixing with those who are prone to the same. Again, under all this there is a crying to the Lord, who alone can shut these lions' mouths, and break the teeth of the young lions. Under all which we are greatly humbled, while they are ripened for destruction. Jeremiah, Job, and David complain much about this, and our dear Lord endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, which we are told to consider, lest we grow weary and faint in our minds. The Psalms of David, as they were written from experience, (for David had many changes,) have been made a blessing, yea, a very great blessing, to the church. In Psalm lxiv. he tells us what he suffered from the tongues of the wicked, and puts up a prayer to the Lord: "Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked, from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity, who whet their tongues like a sword, and bend their bow to shoot their arrows, even bitter words, that they may shoot in secret at the perfect," (that was Christ in David, for there is where all the malice was fixed,) "suddenly do they shoot at him and fear not." (Verses 2—4.) Paul, before his conversion, was the same; hence Christ says, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" "The heart knoweth his own bitterness."

10. Another cause of this bitterness is, *having the heart and affec-*

tions fixed on an idol. I have already treated of our backsliding hearts, and we are continually at this work. But what I mean here is this: when an idol is a set-fast, and works so powerfully that it appears wholly to reign, and nothing else can be attended to. Now, for a time this may go on very pleasantly, and we may be delighted with it; but if such belong to God, they will find the rod heavy afterwards: "Bread of deceit is sweet to a man, but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel." Some of God's children have been ensnared in this way, and have feared that after all they should bring a disgrace on the cause; and when such consider how many there are that fall away altogether through this, O what pain, O what sorrow, O what grief of heart and bitterness are felt! "Here I am," says the soul, "entangled, and against all light and knowledge, I love to an excess what I know is wrong, and what God forbids. If I attempt to pray against it, it only appears to be mockery, because I regard iniquity in my heart." I believe that what I am now writing about is the very depths of Satan; and I have been in this snare and trap twice since I knew the Lord, and expected to be wholly upset. And I could tell the particulars to any tried and tempted soul, and should be glad so to do, if the Lord sent any in my way who might be labouring under the same. But let what has been said suffice here. Solomon seems to have been well acquainted with it. Hear what he says: "For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil, but her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword." (v. 3, 4.) And "I find more bitter than death" (the bitterness was so great that he seems at a loss to set it forth fully; he, therefore, first calls it wormwood, and then more bitter than death) "the woman whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands. Whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her, but the sinner shall be taken by her." (Eccl. vii. 26.) Now, observe, it does not say that he that pleaseth God shall keep clear of her altogether, but escape from her: "He will make a way to escape," as Peter says. And what is it to please God? Answer: To believe with the heart in the perfect and spotless righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ; for God the Father is well pleased for his righteousness' sake. Now, such are sure to please God. But who is the sinner? I answer, An insensible sinner, a hypocrite in Zion, destitute of this saving faith; such shall be taken by her. For "without faith it is impossible to please God." Now, these passages of Solomon may allude to a false church, or it may also allude to individuals. See Huntington's "History of Little Faith;" how Little Faith was entangled with Mara Duplicity, and what bitterness of soul he felt: "The heart knoweth his own bitterness."

11. Another cause of much bitterness to a child of God is, *wicked and ungodly children.* "Yes," say some that never had the trial, "and it is their own fault; for Solomon says, 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.'" To this I answer, that none but God can train a child up in the way

he should go. Many have laboured hard here, with good instructions, counsel, caution, example, and advice, and with constant and fervent prayer, but all to no saving purpose. Yet all this is right and commendable, and what God's children's hearts are set upon. "Why," say you, "you are not going to contradict the wise man?" No, I am not. It is plain that his meaning cannot be what the plain words are in the letter, and what every one might conclude, even those that are not taught of God; or else how could they be called dark sayings? Besides, do you not believe that David trained up Solomon in the way he should go? (1 Chr. xxviii. 9.) And yet when he was old he departed from it. But God can do this effectually, bless his dear name. I well know that the Arminians take it as it is in the letter, and they really believe they can accomplish such a work; but let me tell them, that it will go ill with such children if they do not depart from such instructions; and that is true. But, after all, how is this text to be cleared up? Answer: By turning it into prayer, and if God answer it, then the child will be well trained up. For he says, that all his children shall be taught of him, and when they are old they shall not finally depart from God's way. Why? "I will put my fear in their hearts, and they shall not" (apostatize) "depart from me." God trains up and keeps us from apostasy; but none else can. What is the way? I answer, Christ in the heart: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. Say you, "I like to give the glory to the creature;" and I delight to give the glory to God; for he has all power, and he is worthy of it, and he says, that "to hoar hairs and old age he will carry us." David had very bad children, and says, "Although my house be not so with God," yet I cannot say that he was careless about their instructions. Hezekiah was a good king, and no doubt instructed Manasseh; but if God had not taken him in hand, and trained him up, where would he have gone? where? why, to hell! Now, do not misunderstand me, and conclude from what I have written that it matters not; I shall leave my children to go on as they like, for we never can alter it. Stop, before you run on too fast; consider how Eli was reprov'd for such negligence. His sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. You and I are to be found using all lawful means; and if not, we act contrary to his revealed will. We are to cleanse our way by taking heed thereto according to God's word, and not to take one part of the Scriptures and reject another.

12. Another cause of bitterness is, *the loss of children*, when removed by death, and particularly if they have been such as we have had reason to believe that God loved them; and although it may be otherwise, yet we do not like them to go, knowing the awful consequences. There was a great woman, (or one of God's children, who was rich in worldly things,) and she called in Elisha as he went past, and was very kind to him, and after this had gone on some time he asked her what should be done for her for all her kindness, and he proposed several things, but she refused, saying, "I dwell among mine own people; and Gehazi said, Verily she hath no child." And the pro-

phet predicted that she should have a son; and "she answered, Do not lie unto thine handmaid." However, her unbelief did not make the promise of God of none effect, for it took place. Now, when grown, he was in the field with the reapers, and complained of his head. They took him home, and he died at noon on his mother's lap. After this she saddled the ass, and went after the prophet; and when she came to the man of God, to the hill, she caught him by the feet; but Gehazi came near to thrust her away, and the man of God said, "Let her alone, for her soul is vexed" (margin, bitter) "within her," &c. (2 Kings iv. 27.) You see grace rather increases than destroys natural affection and tender feelings. "The heart knoweth his own bitterness," &c.

13. Another cause of much bitterness is this, *it always is joined in the work of God in every real saint.* A real child of God always will find it so in his experience; in this lower world it ever will be so; and it is very needful, seeing that the brightest saint carries two natures about with him all his days. It matters not how highly favoured you and I may be. God hath joined these two conditions together in the experience of all his beloved people; neither can it be altered. Hence you read of the day of adversity and the day of prosperity; of going in and out, and finding pasture; in (as Mr. H. used to say) to feed, and out to get an appetite. A daily cross and a path of tribulation all will find, let them be circumstanced as they may. All that are God's children will find this out, if they live after their conversion. Paul must have his thorn in the flesh, and bitter enough this was, and a law in the members warring against the law of his mind, so that he cries out, "Wretched man that I am!"

There are changes that greatly puzzle us at our first going on in the ways of God. I have gone to hear Mr. H. before now, and have come away satisfied that God had begun a good work in my soul, and felt a real love to him, believing that he would perfect that which concerneth me; but I have found at times that a very little would rob me of it, and then, O what bitterness of soul and anguish of spirit! If you and I get any good under the word, the devil is on the watch to plunder us of it. All Christ's garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, &c. Aloes, you know, is a very bitter thing, and the passover was to be eaten with bitter herbs. Christ is our Passover; eating it is feeding on him as a sacrifice for our sins. But we shall soon find the bitter herbs, for "the heart knoweth his own bitterness," &c. "And they shall eat the flesh in that night roast with fire, and unleavened bread, and with bitter herbs shall they eat it." (Exod. xii. 8.) Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God "which taketh away the sins of the world." But this Lamb, as Hart says, "was roasted in the flame," that is, he endured the wrath of God due unto us; and our eating him is believing that his blood was shed for us: "He that eateth me even he shall live by me; and whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life."

By the unleavened bread sincerity and truth are meant; as Paul

says, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us, therefore, let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." These bitter herbs which were to be eaten with it agree with John's little book. He was ordered to eat it up, and so were the Israelites to eat up the passover. In John's mouth it was as sweet as honey, and so is Jesus Christ to a perishing sinner; but when John had eaten it, his belly was bitter; and so it is with us after having a feast upon the Lord Jesus Christ. (Rev. x. 9.) "The heart knoweth his own bitterness," &c.

14th and lastly. *A bitterness which every minister sent of God will at times feel.* However some men may play with people's souls, while they rob their pockets, it is not so with those that he is pleased to furnish for the work with his grace and spirit. It is a very weighty concern to them, and they are very backward to engage in such a work. How many excuses Moses made! and Jeremiah would have run from it altogether. But you will not find our bishops running from it. O no; except they are not paid well enough; but that it is a trying thing to such as God sends, observe: "Moreover, he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears, and go get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and tell them, thus saith the Lord, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear." (Ezek. iii. 10 and 14.) "So the Spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in bitterness in the heat of my spirit; but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me."

You see, those that God sends to the work do not find it so very easy. It is not such a smooth path; for he went in bitterness in the heat of his spirit, and God's hand was strong upon him, as it was upon the prophet Isaiah. Hence he also says, "The Lord instructed me with a strong hand; and it was that he might not say a confederacy, as men will do if they are quite strangers to such a teaching." Peter calls it "The mighty hand of God." The prophet Isaiah, whom I have just mentioned, also felt the bitterness: "The burden of the valley of vision. What aileth thee now that thou art wholly gone up to the house tops, thou that art full of stirs, a tumultuous city, a joyous city? thy slain men are not slain with the sword, nor dead in battle. Therefore said I, Look away from me: I will weep bitterly; labour not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people; for it is a day of trouble, and treading down, and perplexity by the Lord God of Hosts, in the valley of vision." (Isaiah xxii. 4, 5.) "The Lord is exalted, for he dwelleth on high; he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness." "Behold their valiant ones shall cry without; the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly." (Isaiah xxii. 7.) Those that are beautiful upon the mountains, that publish salvation, that publish peace, that say unto Zion, Thy God reigneth; these very men that are ambassadors of this peace are at other times to weep bitterly; so that it is no easy thing.

(To be continued.)

THE EXPERIENCE OF J. CENNICK.

(Concluded from page 45.)

About the latter end of the year 1738, a person, to whom I was then a stranger, lent me a part of Mr. Whitefield's "Journal," which much against my will I read; for I feared to read any book save the Bible and Hugo's "Emblems." But when I read at the place where he mentions the woman who had been in the pangs of the new birth, my heart cleaved unto him, believing him not unacquainted with that bitter cup, the dregs of which I had long been drinking. I laid down the book, and went straightway into an upper chamber to pray, if by any means God would permit me to come to the knowledge of this man. When I was on my knees I prayed, and said, "O Lord Jesus, who knowest well the sorrows of my troubled spirit, who alone canst give me a companion in my way to thee; permit me to be intimate with this thy servant, now sent forth to preach thy gospel in other lands. Incline him to stoop to hear me, and to speak humbly to me; and so join us together, that together we may be accounted worthy to rest in the kingdom of God for ever." Before I rose up the Lord answered me; while I was speaking, God showed me how I should be conversant with him and be beloved by him. I verily believed this, and rejoiced when I thought the day would soon bring it to pass.

Soon after, I was invited to a gentlewoman's to supper, where were present her son and another young gentleman from Oxford. In the evening I was asked to play at cards; I waived it, and desired to be excused, being so afraid of snares that I trembled at them. I was still urged, because there was no harm in it; and I as often refused, saying, I believed at best it was misspending the time. Then the young gentleman answered, "There is just such a stupid, religious fellow at Oxford; one Kinchin, whose brother is of our college, and was once as foolish as he; but he is much otherwise now." The news so rejoiced my heart, that from that day I was not at rest till I should see him. My mouth was full of thanksgivings and praises, that I was not left in the wide world alone, but had now the hope of having a companion. This was all the character I had of him, and in the midst of my joy at these tidings I forgot his name, but remembering he had a brother in Trinity College with my acquaintance, I despaired not of being happy in his company on this side Paradise.

With this hope, on a wet Monday, after the morning service at St. Mary's, Reading, I began my journey to Oxford.* The enemy was not wanting to persuade me to turn back, and especially when I was within sight of the city, asking, "What am I going for? To seek an unknown person, not knowing his name nor his college. What would the world say if they knew my errand?" At the brow of a hill, three or four miles on this side I stood, and prayed thus: "O Lord God of Israel, who didst direct the servant of Abraham to find a wife for his master Isaac, when he sought her in a strange country; direct me, I pray thee, that I may find out this man, and make my

* About twenty-eight miles, which he seems to have walked.

way prosperous to thy glory; and let his heart be open to speak kindly to me, for thy sake." When I ceased, the tempter departed from me for a season, and I went on my way through much rain and wind, till I came, wet to the skin, to St. Clement's in the evening; and there my lodging was so cold and hard, that I was almost in as bad a condition as if I had lain in the street. I rose early, and feeling the air excessively sharp, could scarcely help wishing I had stayed at home; and indeed, thought of returning without seeking any further. But while I thought on these things, the Lord gave me courage to go on, and in his name I went out to Trinity College; and having found my acquaintance, I desired him to mention the names of all the scholars and commoners of his college. He began, and soon named Kinchin. When I answered, "That is the name," he said, "He has a brother a Methodist, a fellow of Corpus Christi College." I then took my leave of him, and went to see what the Lord would do with me. I soon found the college, but Mr. Kinchin was from home; yet considering it might not be long ere he returned, I waited in the cloisters of the college, and in the new buildings, till cold, weary, and hungry. After eight in the evening I returned to my uncomfortable lodging. In the morning, I was again tempted to go home without seeking any further; but considering it was not far out of my way, I resolved to try once more. After I had prayed for prosperity, I went on, and when I came to Mr. Kinchin's room, found him just going out to breakfast. I asked him if his name was Kinchin? He told me, Yes. I said, "Sir, I heard you were despised on the same account with me, and should be glad to speak with you a quarter of an hour." He then spoke kindly unto me, and having bid me to come in, asked me if I would join in prayer with him? I told him "With all my heart;" when he prayed God to bless my coming, and to prepare the words which should be spoken to his own glory. After prayer, I talked with him some time, yet was afraid to mention my temptations and trials, lest he should think them incredible. He asked me if I would go to breakfast with him in Bear-lane, to which I consented; and as soon as breakfast was ended, he desired I would stay while he went to visit a sick person, and he would return. I then began to fall into discourse with the woman at whose house we were, to whom I told much of my experience; after which she related some of her own, not unlike mine. She asked me if I had told Mr. Kinchin, and earnestly pressed me to do so. Presently came Mr. Kinchin, with two other gownsmen, before whom I spoke of the Lord's dealings with me; and also before a little society, who rejoiced greatly, and blessed God that he had thus far directed me.

By this means I got acquainted with many of the Lord's people, among whom was Mr. Whitefield; in all which I saw the hand of the Lord clearly, especially in my being intimate with the latter, which was in this way. I heard of his being come to London, and because he should not be gone, I set out from Reading in the dusk of the evening, and walked all night.* I inquired for him at Mr. Hutton's, at Temple

* Reading is thirty-eight miles from London.

Bar, early in the morning. They told me he would be there at eight of the clock, and about that time I met my dear brother, and fell on his neck and kissed him. I stayed with him several days, and our communion was sweet continually. When I purposed returning, I told him I had a mind to visit the brethren at Bristol. He told me that a school was about to be built at Kingswood, for the use of the colliers' children; and asked me, if I were willing to be one of the masters there. The thing seemed to be of God, and I was obedient; and having taken my leave of him, I came to Reading, which lay in my road to Bristol. On Whit-Monday, June 11, 1739, I set out thence on foot with one of the brethren of London; and though we were stayed by the rains and the bad roads, yet we reached Sandy-lane the first night.* The people of the place were in bed before we arrived, and the inns as well as private houses refusing us room, we lay down in an old stable in a yard. The cold wind, which blew all night, and our want of victuals, made us go forward early to the next place; and about the close of Tuesday we got safe into Bristol.

I here spent my time till Thursday, as far as I had power, in waiting upon God; when I was asked by some to go to Kingswood, to hear a young man read a sermon to the colliers. I readily consented, having been desirous of seeing the people of that place a long time.

When we were come to the place, (which was under a sycamore tree near the intended school,) we waited some time among the colliers, who were seriously attending round the tree, in number about four or five hundred, till the young man should come. But while he delayed beyond the appointed time, a gentlewoman of St. Philip's-plain, and a young man who came with us, desired me either to read a sermon or expound a chapter. I had no power to refuse or gainsay; and though I was naturally fearful of speaking before company, having never done such a thing, yet so much was I pressed in spirit to testify the salvation of Jesus to the people, that I fell on my knees, and besought the Lord to be with me in the work, and prevent me if his Majesty were offended.

Scarcely had we ended prayer, when the young man came who was to read; and though he was urged to begin by many friends, yet he would not consent, but intreated, if I were inclined, to expound. Yet after all this I was afraid, lest the Lord should not teach me what to say. Again I prayed, and finding great freedom, I then tarried no longer, but rose up and went to the congregation, the Lord bearing witness with my word, insomuch that many believed in that hour.

On Friday, I again expounded a part of St. James's Epistle at White Hill, about a mile distant from the school, where many behaved in the most devout way I had ever seen. Tears fell from many eyes; and when we had joined in singing a hymn we parted, and were brought on our way home by several of the colliers.

On Sunday, June 17th, I expounded again, (under the sycamore tree,) the first chapter of St. John's Gospel; and in the afternoon

* About fifty miles.

discoursed to about four thousand on the Day of Judgment, from the 13th of Mark. Here, also, the power of God was present, and his word did not fall to the ground.

On the 14th day of June, 1740, the burden of the Lord came upon me; and unto this day the Lord, according to his word, hath been a mouth to me, and, through his abundant love, has kept me from all doubts and murmurings, in a settled peace passing all understanding. In which I now wait till my dear Lord shall call me from his vineyard to sit down in his everlasting Sabbath; and of this I am well persuaded, that when I have done the work for which I am sent, I shall no more be a stranger upon the earth, but shall ascend to dwell in my Saviour's bosom, and in the kingdom of my Father for ever and ever. Amen.

It is good that a man bear the yoke in his youth. O what great troubles hast thou shown me; and yet didst thou turn again and refresh me.

FRAGMENT OF A LETTER BY LEIGHTON.

Thorns grow everywhere and from all things below; and to a soul transplanted out of itself to the Root of Jesse, peace grows every where too, from Him who is our peace, and whom we shall find the more to be so, the more entirely we live in him, by being dead to this world, to flesh and sense, and all things besides him. O, when shall it be? What is this poor moment, and all that concerns it, to the immense eternity that we believe? and how doth one serious thought of it shrink all affairs, public and private, and all this present world into nothing! What have we to think of, and when we meet to speak of, but that, till the blessed day come that shall let us into it? We have his promise, that if in all our ways we acknowledge him, he will direct our paths.

Seeing our great Father descends to the ordering of the low concerns of our life, we are very unwise and ungrateful not to observe and read the print of his blessed finger in them who has made flies with so much art, and is truly great in the least things. Courage, it shall be well; we follow a conquering General, yea, who hath conquered already; and He who once conquered for us, shall always conquer in us.

I have nothing to say of affairs private or public; and to strike up discoursés on devotion, alas! what is here to be said but what you sufficiently know and daily think? And I am beaten back, if I had a mind to speak of these things, by the sense of so great a deficiency in doing those things that the most ignorant among Christians cannot but know. Instead of all fine notions, I fly to "Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy." I am grown exceeding sensitive to writing and to speaking, yea, almost to thinking; when I think, What does it do? and withal, how cloudy our clearest thoughts are. But I think again, What other can we do till the day break and the shadows flee away? As one that lieth awake in the night must be thinking, and one

thought that will be likely oftenest to return, when by all the other he finds little relief, is, *When will it be day?*

Your love of holiness and devotion I wholly agree with, and do really prefer the study of it to all other studies; yea, I humbly desire to bless his name, and kiss his gracious hand, that hath delivered me from the painful pursuit of what we call learning, and from the foolish pleasure of venting any little of it that I have. I write it on my books, and wish it engraven on my heart: "I determine to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified."

OBITUARY.

"PRECIOUS in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;" and if precious in his sight, it should be so in ours. Every display of the exceeding riches of God's grace is sweet and profitable; and that not only to the happy partaker, but to others also who have eyes to see and hearts to feel what grace is, and what grace does. But especially when this grace is displayed on a dying bed does it seem to shine forth in all its beauty and glory. Such an instance have I lately witnessed; and at the earnest desire of some highly esteemed friends I have attempted to gather up what can be remembered.

Rebecca Sewell was a native of Oakham, Rutland, her mother being a member of the church at Providence Chapel in that town. She earned her living by dress-making, and chiefly by going to work at people's houses, being much liked by her employers for her cheerful, generous, and warm-hearted disposition. Great openness and sincerity were prominent features in her character; and though she showed much sympathy and kindness to the sick and afflicted, she was high-spirited and impetuous when opposed. She made no profession of religion, though she attended the chapel regularly, except once for the space of six weeks, when she stayed away through a sense of her unworthiness to come among the people of God. Though she never spoke about religion, she felt at times much conviction under the word, was often cut off and condemned. She fully received the doctrine of election, but only to condemnation, and believed were she to die in her then state, hell must be her portion. All this she mentioned on her death-bed, but never spoke of it till then.

On one occasion, having accompanied some young friends to Stamford fair, such a sense of eternity came on her mind, and such a gloom fell upon her spirit, that her companions could not help expressing their surprise that she, usually so cheerful and lively, should be so melancholy and cast down. What was the matter with her she knew not, except that she was a guilty sinner, and that made her miserable. All that she heard of the gospel served only to condemn her, knowing that a change was required by it of which her conscience witnessed she knew nothing. Her character, it may be observed, was very good, and her life and deportment modest,

though in manner very lively and cheerful. Her health was good until about April 1848, when it began gradually to decline, until she sank into the arms of death. The exact time when her soul was quickened to feel the weight and burden of sin is not known, as she carried the load in secret, and was fearful to say a word upon religion lest it should prove hypocrisy, or be considered so by others. But some months before she died, her medical attendant gave her no hope of recovery, which greatly cast her down; and on one occasion particularly, when he was feeling her pulse, her awful state by nature and practice fell with such weight and power on her conscience, that she could not lift up her eyes to speak to him. As her health grew decidedly worse her distress of soul increased; but still she disclosed nothing of her inward feelings, till one day, when a friend calling to see her as she was lying very ill upon the sofa, and saying something about religion, Rebecca burst into tears, and weeping bitterly, said in a very distressed tone of voice, "If God does not show me mercy, I must sink for ever into hell; and what an awful state will that be!" The friend said, "Christ died to save sinners." She answered, "I know I have many great sins; but I have not felt the weight of them as I believe I must before God will pardon me. I do not mind how much I suffer, if God will but show me mercy." About this time a person (a Methodist) who came to see her, in answer to her complaints, said to her, "Why lie here and sink into hell? Give up your heart to God, and he will pardon you;" mentioning at the same time some person, who, she said, had done so, and obtained mercy. Rebecca, however, had had the sinews of free-will and creature-strength too deeply cut, not to feel this was bidding the Ethiopian change his skin and the leopard his spots, and therefore replied, "I have no power in myself to do anything towards my salvation. If God do not show me mercy, I must be lost." Though almost in despair herself, it was surprising what an insight she had into the emptiness and hollowness of all profession without power; and especially of all creature-righteousness or ability, and of the state and condition of such as rested upon it. Her own state she said she would not change with theirs.

About this time, several of the members of the church, hearing of the state of her mind, called to see her, and expressed a good hope that the Lord was really at work on her soul.

She said to one of them, "If Mr. Tiptaft was here I should like to see him. I think he would come and see me; but I shall not live till he comes next summer." The friend said, "Would you like to see Mr. P.?" "Yes," she replied, "if he would come. I like to hear him better than any one; but I think he would not like to come and see me, as I have made no profession." The circumstance was named to Mr. P., and he said he would go to see her. When he entered into the room, she burst into a violent and long flood of tears, and when become sufficiently calm to speak, mentioned in a simple and feeling manner the exercises of her mind, how she felt her lost, undone state, and was crying for mercy, but was utterly helpless, and unable to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

A few nights afterwards, she had a kind of vision. Several friends seemed to be with her, whom she knew to be the Lord's, and she thought she was going to heaven, her whole soul being filled with such happiness as she could not describe. But next morning, all the impression being gone, she sank into her former distressed state, and feared lest what she had felt in the night was produced by an opiate that she had taken. A few days after this, in the dead of night, she had such an agony of soul and distress of mind, that she thought she must have sunk under it. Satan seemed to have got her in his possession, and to be taking her with him to hell. But in the midst of her distress these words were spoken into her heart: "I have chosen thee before the foundation of the world; thou art mine; I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Her misery fled; joy and peace filled her soul; and during the remainder of the night she was lost in wonder, love, and praise. Her mother is very deaf, and Rebecca being so weak in body, did not, as she could have wished, call her up to rejoice with her. But in the morning, when her mother asked her what sort of night she had passed, she said, "Come and I will tell you;" and mentioned what the Lord had done for her, and the joy and peace she felt. Mother and daughter then rejoiced together; but after a little time it seemed suggested to the mother that it might be a delusion, and some of the friends hinted the same. Rebecca, however, felt a sweet persuasion that it was of the Lord; and as he had assured her that he had chosen her, and would never leave her, nor forsake her, she felt a trust and confidence in him that he would not go from his word.

A few days after, as she was sitting with her mother alone, her sins came all before her mind and fell upon her conscience, even to the taking formerly of a few bits of print for patchwork; but in the midst of her distress these words came to her soul: "I have blotted out thy sins as a thick cloud; I have redeemed thee; thou art mine." And such power accompanied the words, and such a sweet sense of pardon flowed into her soul, that her very body seemed to sink away exhausted under it, and she could only gently whisper, "My dear Jesus." The words, "I have redeemed thee," continued with her all the rest of the day; and the temptation on the mind of her mother that her former manifestation was a delusion was removed. Rebecca's countenance, manner, and language were now all altered. For many days joy and peace filled her soul; and whilst the presence of the Lord continued with her, she would freely tell all the Lord's people who came to see her how good the Lord had been to so sinful a wretch, and what great and blessed things he had done for her soul. To them indeed it was a marvellous change. Those who had known her in her giddy days, and afterwards in her distressed state of soul, were struck with wonder, and could only say, "What hath God wrought!"

Soon after this her comforts began to decline, and for many days her soul walked in darkness. During this period she was usually very silent; and when she spoke of the state of her soul, all she could say was, "I feel so unhappy; but God cannot go from his word."

Whilst in this dark and exercised state these words were one night spoken to her soul: "Wait upon the Lord, and he will show you his mercy." Her happiness returned, and the next day death came before her; her days seemed numbered, and her departure all but nigh, when the words came, "I will be with thee in the shadow of death." Joy and peace flowed into her soul, and the sting of death was taken away. I may observe that, previously to this last manifestation, she had been almost miraculously strengthened to get to chapel, where she heard a sermon from Deut. xxxii. 10, 11, 12; and when asked how she had heard, said, "I never heard so before; it was all for me." This was in December, 1845, after the Lord had blessed her soul, and manifestly pardoned her sins. In that sermon much was spoken upon the soul's being borne on the wings of love, as "the eagle bears her young upon her wings;" and, alluding to this, when the words came, "I will be with you in the shadow of death," and she felt as if dying from exhaustion of body, and her whole soul sweetly drawn out by the love of God, she said, "He is taking me on the wings of love to himself; what a mercy, what a mercy! I shall not be long here; I shall not live to see Mr. T." Her medical attendant said, "I think you will not die this attack; but I do not believe you will live to see Mr. T."

She lived a fortnight after this, and was much pleased when any of the people of God called, (and there were those who felt a sweet union with her,) to tell them what the Lord had done for her soul, adding, if he did but raise her up sufficiently to go through the ordinance of baptism, how she should rejoice to do so. She said how she loved the people of God.

Soon after this her sufferings increased, and during the last week of her life she had almost continual hiccough, and sickness nearly every half hour. But between the paroxysms she would still talk of God's mercy to her soul. Her great fear was lest she should murmur. The words seemed much on her mind, "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved;" as she would often say, "O that I may endure to the end." For a little while she was again in darkness, but the Lord once more appeared, and she said, "I am happy now; I shall go to heaven;" and repeated the hymn,

"If sin be pardon'd, I'm secure,
Death hath no sting beside."

On another occasion, seeing her mother in tears, she said, "Don't fret, mother; cheer the dying bed; I am quite happy;" and repeated the words,

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Soft as downy pillows are."

She often expressed her gratitude to those kind friends who attended her night and day. The last few hours before she died she became very restless. Looking at a dear Christian friend, who was sitting by, she said, "I have need of patience." Her friend answered, "Rebecca, you have had your desire fulfilled, for I have not heard you once murmur." Shortly after this she said with great fervour,

“I have endured to the end! to the end! to the end!” She then spoke out in a clear, distinct voice, “Ascribe unto him praise, and honour, and glory! Ascribe unto him praise, and honour, and glory!” These were her last words, and in less than five minutes afterwards she turned her head to one side, and gently breathed her last, April 30th, 1849.

Oakham, May, 1849.

AN EYEWITNESS.

THE CRY OF ONE IN DISTRESS.

“Behold, the woman cried to the King.”—2 KINGS viii. 5.

If any ask why should I cry,
In darkness mourn, in secret sigh;
It is the King I want to see,
And hear him say, “I’ve loved thee.”

He cheer’d me in a day that’s o’er,
But now I knock at Mercy’s door;
O would he now my strength renew!
I want with him an interview.

My wants before him I would spread,
And place the crown on his dear head.
If thou a blessing, Lord, impart,
I’ll sit and tell thee all my heart.

Ye children of the light and day,
’Tis not enough for you to say
That sin may plague, but never reign;
This will not ease me of my pain.

I want from sorrow to be freed;
I want by precious faith to feed;
’Twill make the pleasant tear to flow,
When Jesus doth this gift bestow.

I know his promises are sure,
And everlasting shall endure;
But O, I find no sacred rest,
Till I am by my Jesus bless’d.

Thus I have said what makes me cry;
Would Jesus all my need supply!
By him may I be sweetly bless’d!
This, this alone can give me rest.

Great Waking, Essex.

W. W.

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

To be morose, implacable, inexorable, and revengeful, is one of the greatest degeneracies of human nature. (Eccles. vii. 9.)—*Owen*.

I love to sit on Christ’s knee; but I cannot set my feet to the ground, for afflictions bring the cramp upon my faith. All I now do is, to hold out a lame faith to Christ, like a beggar holding out a stump, instead of an arm or leg; and cry, Lord Jesus, work a miracle. O what would I give to have hands and arms, to grip strongly, and fold heartily about Christ’s neck, and to have my claim made good with real possession!—*Rutherford*.

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 a 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. 10.

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VOL. XVI.

THE LAST DAYS OF JOHN KNOX, THE GREAT
SCOTCH REFORMER.

[There is something in the death-bed of eminent saints, when the Lord's power and grace are signally manifested, so edifying, that we have felt induced to lay before our readers the last days of John Knox. And as there are circumstances connected with the history of those times which may not be known to the generality of our readers, and yet which require a little acquaintance with in order to understand some striking features of Knox's last moments, we have been tempted to go a little out of our usual path to explain them. In our own lives, in our own experience, what a blending there is of things in providence with things in grace, so that neither can be separated without injury to the other! So in the case of John Knox, historical circumstances are so mingled with spiritual, that they cannot well be separated. But we have thrown these historical explanations into notes at the foot of the page, so that those who only wish to read what is strictly spiritual can pass them by.]

Let us never forget that it is to such men as John Knox we owe; under God, our deliverance from Popery and all its abominations, as well as all our religious and civil liberties. If we sit under our own vine and fig-tree, none making us afraid, it is to their sweat and blood we owe it. Thanks be to God for the blessed Reformation! Thanks to his Holy Name for raising up such a man as John Knox, and blessing and honouring him in life and death.]

“In the beginning of September, 1572, intelligence came to Edinburgh, that the Admiral of France, the brave, the generous Coligni was murdered in the city of Paris, by the orders of Charles IX. Immediately on the back of this, tidings arrived of that most detestable and unparalleled scene of barbarity and treachery, the

general massacre of the Protestants throughout the kingdom.* Post after post brought fresh accounts of the most shocking and unheard-of cruelties. Hired cut-throats and fanatical cannibals marched from city to city, paraded the streets, and entered into the houses of those that were marked for destruction. No reverence was shown to the hoary head, no respect to rank or talents, no pity to tender age or sex. Aged matrons, women upon the point of their delivery, and children, were trodden under the feet of the assassins, or dragged with hooks into the rivers. Others, after being thrown into prison, were instantly brought out and butchered in cold blood. Seventy thousand persons were murdered in one week. For several days the streets of Paris literally ran with blood. The savage monarch, standing at the windows of the palace, with his courtiers, glutted his eyes with the inhuman spectacle, and amused himself with firing upon the miserable fugitives who sought shelter at his merciless gates.†

The intelligence of this massacre (for which a solemn thanksgiving was offered up at Rome by order of the Pope) produced the same horror and consternation in Scotland as in every other Protestant country. It inflicted a deep wound on the exhausted spirit of Knox. Besides the blow struck at the whole reformed body, he had to lament the loss of many individuals eminent for religion, learning, and rank, whom he numbered among his acquaintances. Being conveyed to the pulpit, and summoning up the remainder of his strength, he thundered the vengeance of heaven against that cruel murderer and false traitor, the King of France, and desired Le Croc, the French ambassador, to tell his master that sentence was pronounced against him in Scotland, that the divine vengeance would never depart from him nor his house, if repentance did not ensue; but his name would remain an execration to posterity, and none proceeding from his loins would enjoy the kingdom in peace.‡ The ambassador complained of

* Generally called "The St. Bartholomew Massacre," because perpetrated at Paris on St. Bartholomew's day, August 24, 1572, though planned nearly eight years before.

† The conduct of this inhuman wretch is thus recorded in a French History: "When morning dawned, the king, who had got rid of his terrors, called for his long fowling-piece, and placed himself at one of the windows of the palace which looked on the Seine, and employed himself in firing on the wretched Huguenots, who were endeavouring to secure themselves by crossing the river. He continually exclaimed, in French, as he aimed at the fugitives, 'Kill, kill! Shoot, shoot! They are getting away!'"

‡ This prophecy was remarkably fulfilled. That wicked king, Charles IX., died in less than two years afterwards, May 30th, 1574; his only daughter died 1578; his brother Henry III., who succeeded him, was stabbed by a monk, August 1st, 1589; and dying without issue, the house of Valois, which had reigned more than two hundred and fifty years, became extinct. Charles IX.'s own life was miserable for the short time he survived the massacre, and his death-bed full of horror. Two short extracts will show this:

"While the massacre was going on, Charles seemed like one possessed. A few days after, he said to the celebrated Ambrose Paré, his surgeon,

the indignity offered to his master, and required the regent to silence the preacher; but this was refused; upon which he left Scotland.

Lawson having received the letters of invitation, hastened to Edinburgh, and had the satisfaction to find that Knox was still able to receive him. Having preached to the people, he gave universal satisfaction. On the following Sabbath, 21st September, Knox began to preach in the Tolbooth Church, which was now fitted up for him. He chose for the subject of his discourses, the account of our Saviour's crucifixion, as recorded in the xxviii. chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew; a theme upon which he often expressed a wish to close his ministry. On Sabbath the 9th of November, he presided in the installation of Lawson as his colleague and successor. The sermon was preached by him in the Tolbooth Church. After it was ended, he removed with the audience to the large church, where he went through the accustomed form of admission, by proposing the questions to the minister and people, addressing an exhortation to both, and praying for a divine blessing upon the connexion. Upon no former occasion did he deliver himself more to the satisfaction of those who were able to hear him. After declaring the mutual duties of pastor and congregation, he protested, in the presence of Him before whom he expected soon to appear, that he had walked among them with a good conscience, preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ in all sincerity, not studying to please men, nor to gratify his own affections; he praised God, that he had been pleased to give them a pastor in his room, when he was now unable to teach; he fervently prayed that any gifts which had been conferred on himself might be augmented a thousand-fold on his successor; and, in a most serious and impressive manner, he exhorted and charged all present to adhere steadfastly to the faith which they had professed. Having finished the service, and pronounced the blessing with a cheerful but exhausted voice, he

and a Protestant, 'I know not how it is, but for the last few days I feel like one in a fever; my mind and body are both disturbed. Every moment, whether I am asleep or awake, visions of murdered corpses, covered with blood, and hideous to the sight, haunt me. Oh! I wish I had spared the innocent and imbecile!' Charles died in less than two years after the massacre, in agony mental and physical. 'In this state,' says Sully, 'the miserable day of St. Bartholomew was, without ceasing, present to his mind; and he showed by his transports of regret, and by his fears, how much he repented of it.'

"The king's health now rapidly declined, and he was visibly hastening to the grave. He had never been quite himself since the day of St. Bartholomew. His complexion, which before was pale, was now often flushed; his eyes acquired an unnatural fierceness, his nights were restless and disturbed, and his sleep unrefreshing. As his disorder increased, every symptom was aggravated. He was seldom still for an instant. His limbs would at one moment be distorted by convulsive twitches, and the next be so stiff that he could not bend them; and the blood would ooze from the pores of his skin. His physicians, unable to comprehend his disorder, affirmed that it was the effect of poison or of sorcery. Nor was his mind less agitated than his bodily frame. The recollection of the massacre continually haunted him, and he was frequently overheard bewailing his crime with bitter tears and groans."

came down from the pulpit, and, leaning upon his staff, crept down the street, which was lined with the audience, who, as if anxious to take the last sight of their beloved pastor, followed him until he entered his house, from which he never again came out alive.*

On the Tuesday following, (Nov. 11,) he was seized with a severe cough, which, together with the defluxion, greatly affected his breathing. When his friends, anxious to prolong his life, proposed to call in the assistance of physicians, he readily acquiesced, saying that he would not neglect the ordinary means of health, although he was persuaded that the Lord would soon put an end to all his troubles. It was his ordinary practice to read every day some chapters of the Old and New Testaments; to which he added a certain number of the Psalms of David, the whole of which he perused regularly once a month. On Thursday, the 13th, he sickened, and was obliged to desist from his course of reading; but he gave directions to his wife and his secretary, Richard Bannatyne, that one of them should every day read to him with a distinct voice, the 17th chapter of the Gospel according to John, the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, and a chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians. This was punctually complied with during the whole time of his sickness; so that scarcely an hour passed in which some part of Scripture was not read. Besides the above passages, he, at different times, fixed on certain psalms, and some of Calvin's French Sermons on the Ephesians. Sometimes as they were reading these sermons, thinking him to be asleep, they asked him if he heard, to which he answered, "I hear, I praise God, and understand far better," which words he uttered for the last time about four hours before his death.

The same day on which he sickened he desired his wife to discharge the servant's wages; and the next day, wishing to pay one of his men-servants himself, he gave him twenty shillings above his fee, adding,

* There is an account extant by James Melville, then a student of Aberdeen, of Knox's preaching, about a year before his death, so striking and graphic, that we give it in the original Scotch:

"Of all the benefits I haid that year, (1571,) was the coming of that maist notable profet and apostle of our nation, Mr. Jhone Knox, to St. Andrews, who be the faction of the queen occupeing the castell and town of Edinburgh, was compellit to remove therefra, with a number of the best, and chusit to come to St. Andrews. I heard him teache there the prophecies of Daniel, that simmer, and the wintar following. I haid my pen and my litle buike, and tuk away sic things as I could comprehend. In the opening up of his text, he was moderat, the space of an half houre; but when he enterit to application, he made me so to *grew** and tremble that I could not hald a pen to wryt. He was very weik. I saw him every day of his doctrine, go *hulie and fear*,† with a furring of marticks about his neck, a staff in the ane hand, and gud godlie Richart Ballanden, haldin up the uther *oxter*,‡ from the abbey to the parish kirk, and, be the said Richart and another servant, lifted up to the pulpit, whar he behovit to lean, at his first entrie; bot ere he haid done with his sermone, he was sa active and vigorous, that he was lyk to *ding the pulpit in blads*,§ and flie out of it."

* i. e. thrill.

† i. e. slowly and warily.

‡ i. e. arm pit.

§ i. e. beat the pulpit in pieces.

“Thou wilt never receive more of me in this life.” To all his servants he gave suitable exhortations to walk in the fear of God, and as became Christians who had been educated in his family. On Friday, the 14th, he rose from bed sooner than his usual hour; and, thinking that it was the Sabbath, said that he meant to go to church, and preach on the resurrection of Christ, upon which he had meditated through the whole night. This was the subject he should have preached in his ordinary course. But he was so weak that he needed to be supported from his bedside by two men, and it was with great difficulty that he could sit on a chair.

On Sabbath he kept his bed, and mistaking it for the first day of the fast appointed on account of the French massacre, refused to take any dinner. Fairley, of Braid, who was present, informed him that the fast did not commence until the following Sabbath, and sitting down, and dining before his bed, prevailed on him to take a little food. He was very anxious to meet once more with the session of his church, to leave them his dying charge, and bid them a last farewell. In compliance with his wish, his colleague, the elders, and deacons, with David Lindsay, one of the ministers of Leith, assembled in his room, on Monday the 17th, when he addressed them in the following words, which made a deep and lasting impression on the minds of all:—“The day now approaches, and is before the door, for which I have frequently and vehemently thirsted, when I shall be released from my great labours and innumerable sorrows, and shall be with Christ. And now, God is my witness, whom I have served in spirit, in the gospel of his Son, that I have taught nothing but the true and solid doctrine of the gospel of the Son of God; and have had it for my object only to instruct the ignorant, to confirm the faithful, to comfort the weak, the fearful, and the distressed, by the promises of grace, and to fight against the proud and rebellious, by the divine threatenings. I know that many have frequently and loudly complained, and do yet complain, of my too great severity; but God knows that my mind was always void of hatred to the persons of those against whom I thundered the severest judgments. I cannot deny but that I felt the greatest abhorrence at the sins in which they indulged, but I still kept this one thing in view, that, if possible, I might gain them to the Lord. What influenced me to utter whatever the Lord put into my mouth so boldly, without respect of persons, was a reverential fear of my God, who called, and of his grace appointed me to be a steward of divine mysteries; and a belief that he will demand an account of my discharge of the trust committed unto me, when I shall stand before his tribunal. I profess, therefore, before God, and before his holy angels, that I never made merchandise of the sacred word of God, never studied to please men, never indulged my own private passions or those of others, but faithfully distributed the talent entrusted to me for the edification of the church over which I watched. Whatever obloquy wicked men may cast on me respecting this point, I rejoice in the testimony of a good conscience. In the mean time, my dearest brethren, do you persevere in the eternal truth of the gospel; wait diligently on the

flock over which the Lord hath set you, and which he redeemed with the blood of his only begotten Son. And thou, my brother Lawson, fight the good fight, and do the work of the Lord joyfully and resolutely. The Lord from on high bless you, and the whole church of Edinburgh, against whom, as long as they persevere in the word of truth which they have heard of me, the gates of hell shall not prevail." Having warned them against countenancing those who disowned the king's* authority, and made some observations on a complaint which Maitland had lodged against him before the session, he was so exhausted that he was obliged to desist from speaking. Those who were present were filled with both joy and grief by this affecting address. After reminding him of the warfare which he had endured and the triumph which awaited him, and joining in prayer, they took their leave of him in tears. When they were going out, he desired his colleague and Lindsay to remain behind, to whom he said, "There is one thing that greatly grieves me. You have been witnesses of the former courage and constancy of Grange† in the cause of God; but now, alas! into what a gulf has he precipitated himself! I entreat you not to refuse to go, and tell him from me, that John Knox remains the same man now when he is going to die, that ever he knew him when able in body, and wills him to consider what he was, and the estate in which he now stands, which is a great part of his trouble. Neither the craggy rock‡ in which he miserably confides, nor the carnal prudence of that man (Maitland) whom he esteems a demigod, nor the assistance of strangers, shall preserve him; but he shall be disgracefully dragged from his nest to punishment, and hung on a gallows before the face of the sun,§ unless he speedily amend his life, and flee to the mercy of God. That man's soul is dear to me, and I would not have it perish if I could save it." The ministers undertook to execute this commission, and going up to the castle, obtained an interview with the governor, and delivered their message. He at first exhibited some symptoms of relenting, but having consulted with Maitland,|| he returned and gave them a

* James VI., then a minor.

† This Grange, better known as Kircaldy of Grange, was at one time a favourer of the Reformation, and highly esteemed by John Knox; but had been drawn aside by William Maitland, (the Queen's secretary and one of Knox's greatest enemies,) and was at this time governor of the castle at Edinburgh, which he held in favour of the deposed Queen against the lords.

‡ The castle at Edinburgh, built upon a lofty and steep rock, more than 400 feet high, and accessible only on the eastern side, all the others being nearly perpendicular.

§ This prediction was also literally fulfilled. The castle of Edinburgh surrendered; Kircaldy, the governor, was taken and condemned to die; and was literally "hung on a gallows before the face of the sun." When he was on the scaffold, he desired the minister to repeat Knox's last words about him, and said that he hoped they would prove true.

|| The brother of this Maitland likewise experienced that John Knox was a true prophet. When Mary Queen of Scots was confined as a prisoner in Lochleven Castle, the Earl of Murray, to whom Knox was

very unpleasant answer. This being reported to Knox, he was much grieved, and said, that he had been very earnest in prayer for that man, and he still trusted that his soul would be saved, although his body should come to a miserable end.

(*To be concluded in our next.*)

THE LORD KNOWN BY HIS JUDGMENT.

"The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth."—PSALM ix. 16.

There are some described in God's word as desiring neither to know God nor his ways and works: "They say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not a knowledge of thy ways." (Job xxi. 14.) And they persuade their own hearts, however conscience may cry out against it, that God takes no notice of them or of their wicked devices. "He saith in his heart, God hath forgotten; he hideth his face; he will never see it." (Ps. x. 11.) He thinks that because he forgets God, God also forgets him; and "through the pride of his countenance, he will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts." (Ps. x. 4.) And he dreams that his state is as secure as any one's else, that God hideth his face, and will never see it. "He hath said in his heart, I shall never be moved, for I shall never be in adversity." Therefore the righteous cry out, "Arise, O God: O Lord, lift up thy hand. Break thou the arm of the wicked and evil man. Seek out his wickedness till thou find none." And so God most assuredly will; for "the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations

much attached, was appointed Regent of the kingdom; but in less than three years was shot at in the street and killed by a private assassin. These remarks will explain the following extract:

"On the day on which the weekly conference was held in Edinburgh, Thomas Maitland (brother to William Maitland, the secretary of the Queen of Scots) slipped into the pulpit a schedule, containing words to this effect: 'Take up now the man whom you accounted another God, and consider the end to which his ambition hath brought him.' Knox, whose turn it was to preach that day, took up the paper on entering the pulpit, supposing it to be a note requesting the prayers of the congregation for a sick person; and having read it, laid it aside without any apparent emotion. But towards the conclusion of his sermon, having deplored the loss which the church and commonwealth had recently sustained, and declared the account of the conference which had been circulated to be false and calumnious, he said that there were persons who rejoiced at the treasonable murder, and scrupled not to make it the subject of their merriment; particularly there was one present who had thrown in a writing, insulting over an event which was the cause of grief to all good men. 'That wicked man, whosoever he be, shall not go unpunished, and shall die where there shall be none to lament him.' Maitland, when he went home, said to his sister, that the preacher was raving when he spake in such a manner of a person who was unknown to him; but she, understanding that her brother had written the line, reproved him, saying with tears, that none of that man's denunciations were wont to prove idle. Spottiswoode (who had his information personally from the mouth of that lady) says, that Maitland died in Italy, having no known person to attend him.

that forget God." (Ps. ix. 17.) For "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. i. 8.)

The whole heathen world lies under the curse of Almighty God, though the reason of many rises up and opposes this, and says that we make God out unjust in condemning those who never heard his name. But "what saith the Scripture?" And especially what doth it say in reference to idolaters? It says, after giving a long description of the way in which they burn part of a tree to roast with, "With the residue thereof he maketh a god, even a graven image; he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me, for thou art my God." (Isa. xlv. 17.) It then saith that "they have not known nor understood: for he (God) hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand." (ver. 18.) "He feedeth on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" (ver. 20). Here are two particular characteristics, "a deceived heart" and "a lie in his right hand." And these are true marks of reprobation, according to the words of Paul: "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they *all might be damned who believe not the truth*, but have pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess. ii. 11, 12.) And it is very certain that these do not "believe the truth," but that they "have pleasure in unrighteousness." It is also said in a passage just now quoted, "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that *know not God*, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. i. 8.) And it is very certain that, if they neither know God nor obey the gospel, they must then be subject to the vengeance of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As to summoning the most high God to the bar of man's puny reason, by saying that he is unjust in taking vengeance upon the world, we may rest assured that the people who do this are very far out in their reckoning, as regards their own standing in a state of nature. In fact, it is most likely that they never give this question a thought. They forget that, as Adam stood the representative of his whole posterity, when he fell, they all fell into spiritual death at that moment; and that, "as in Adam all die," they forget that they come into the world "*by nature the children of wrath*," and that their very nature entails upon them the never-dying curse of an Almighty God. They talk as though man came into the world but very little worse (if any) for Adam's fall, by which he subjected the whole human race to eternal misery. They forget (if they ever knew it) that "there is no other name under heaven, given among men, (but Christ's,) whereby we can be saved;" and they fancy God must have some other way, (though his word knows nothing save an experimental knowledge of Jesus,) by which the world may get to heaven. They thus throw God's word on one side, set up their reason as Lord Chief Justice of the matter, bring God in unjust, and

represent his true servants as fools, fanatics, or enthusiasts. But let them say what they may, yet "the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." (Prov. xix. 21.) Though heaven and earth pass away, yet his word shall not pass away. He will perform his pleasure, whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear.

The apostle Paul speaks very largely on this important point, in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. He tells us there, "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." (Rom. i. 18.) He does not here mean, as some represent, that they in any measure hold the truth at all, either in heart or head, which is evident from what he afterwards says, when he states they "turn the truth of God into a lie;" but his meaning is, that they imprison it in unrighteousness, and by their actions give the lie to, and hold in unrighteousness the truth of God. He then goes on to tell us the reason that the wrath of God is revealed against them, and it is this: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest to them, for God hath showed it to them." That which may be known of God, Paul, in the next verse, calls "the invisible things of God;" and explains them to be "even his eternal power and Godhead." And this he says is "made manifest to them, for God hath showed it to them." But how hath God shown it to them? Paul tells us that they are "clearly seen, *being understood by the things which are made.*" Now the things which are made, and to which Paul here refers, are God's works in creation, as David tells us, that these manifest to us the being of a true God; and God himself considers it evidence enough to condemn those who do not, through these works, believe in him. "The heavens declare the glory of the Lord; and the firmament showeth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night speaketh knowledge." (Psalm xix.) But as "fools despise wisdom and instruction," they receive not knowledge from the works of the Most High.

Inasmuch as this is the case, Paul goes on to tell us that they are "without excuse; because that, when they knew God, (by having his works manifested to them,) they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Therefore (says Paul) the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things." (Rom. i. 20—23; ii. 2.) For "as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law." (Rom. ii. 12.)

Here, then, with one stroke, the apostle, as well as the Bible, cuts off thousands from the inheritance of Abraham; and, shocking as it may appear to sense and reason, yet Paul declares "the judgment of God is according to truth;" and though men will not bow to it here, yet they shall bow to it hereafter; for it is not the apostle's judgment, but the judgment of God.

But there are thousands of others who pretend to know God for themselves, and that from various sources: Some say they know him from having had pious friends; others, from having gone to Sunday schools; others, from sitting under the truth; others, from reading sound authors; others, from studying the Bible; and others from other causes too numerous to mention. And yet all, peradventure, may be out of the secret; for we must understand that there is a *true* knowledge of God and a *false* knowledge of God; and while the one is in the *head*, the other takes up its seat in the *heart*: and while the one "puffeth up," (1 Cor. viii. 1,) the other is "life eternal." (John xvii. 3.)

Now, this "puffing up" is said to be in a "fleshly mind;" and we know that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God;" (1 Cor. xv. 50;) and the apostle Paul declares that in his flesh dwelt "no good thing." Therefore this "knowledge," which puffeth up a fleshly mind, only serves to ripen thousands of professors for perdition, while they think it is ripening them for glory; for it only calls forth the spiritual pride of their heart, by making them think "they know something, when they know nothing as they ought to know." (1 Cor. viii. 2.) This is the "way that *seemeth* right to a man, but the end thereof is the way of death." (Prov. xiv. 12.)

In this way not a few learn great towering things of God's election, predestination, final perseverance, and all the other truths of the gospel, nay, can split hairs on these precious doctrines, and even get drunk with this "strong drink," which is only meant for them who are "ready to perish;" but these shall all sink by-and-by into the greater gloom, having not learnt these things in the right and proper way; as Bunyan says,

"Like the moon that's past her full, into the wane she goes,
And so shall all but he that *heart-work* knows."

But how, then, is the Lord to be known? I answer, in the words of my text, "The Lord is known *by the judgment which he executeth*;" and I venture to assert, that all the knowledge a person has of God, if he knows him not in this way; will prove to him the greatest of all his miseries in the great day of account. But I wish now to proceed, and show, from my own heart's experience and from the word of God, in some particulars, the way in which God's people become acquainted with the Lord through the judgment that he executeth for and in them.

I. The people of God learn that he is *a sovereign* by the judgment that he executeth. Now, this is a doctrine that is much fought against in the present day. But God has, nevertheless, a "remnant according to the election of grace," who are brought savingly to know him as the Sovereign of all the earth, not by wisdom, not by art, not by science, nor by learning, but "by the judgment which he executeth." And this I believe in three particulars:

1. By bringing them *into trouble*.
2. By *exercising his graces* in trouble.
3. By *delivering them* out of trouble.

And of these three particulars I would wish to write a few words.

1. By bringing the people of God *into trouble*, the Lord teaches them his sovereignty. The children of God have no chance troubles, but all their troubles come, directly or indirectly, from the Lord. It is his own word, "In the world ye shall have tribulation," (John xvi. 33;) and on this hook, if I may so speak, he has hung many blessings, for "tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed." He has in his sovereign will so ordered it that we shall have trouble here, that we may be turned out of our nests, and feel that we have no abiding city. Thus it was with Job, for he said, "I shall die in my nest and multiply my days as the sand." (Job xxix. 18.) But the Lord turned him out of his nest; by bringing trouble and affliction upon him, he made him shake his feathers and look about him, and brought him to abhor himself in dust and ashes, and worked this acknowledgment of his sovereignty in Job's heart and mouth: "I know that thou canst do everything, and no thought of thine can be withholden." (Job xlii. 2.) This was the way in which the Lord brought Job into trouble, and showed his sovereignty; but he is not bound to work the same troubles in us to bring us to the same point, for he has various means of bringing us there; but has in his wisdom seen fit to order it so that trouble of some sort or other shall do it. I will mention a few.

First, *Adverse circumstances*. The Lord knows well where we need crosses most, just in what quarter, and just at what time. And he generally cuts us at the tenderest places, and brings that very trouble upon us which we dread the most; so that we feel, "If it was not *just so*, then I could bear it; but now I seem as if I cannot bear up any longer." Aye, but it was to be *just so*; and that for wise ends, which we shall by-and-by see. God sees fit to cross our wills right in the middle of them. If we want this, we shall not have it; and if we do not want the other, we shall have it. Jacob shall lose his Joseph, though he is the nearest tie, and he had rather lose anything else; and David shall have a Saul at his heels, though he would rather have anything else. All these things seem against us while they are in operation; but all work together for good in our latter end, and teach us the sovereignty of God in raising up what troubles he sees fit.

Secondly, *A diseased body*. Not a few of the Lord's dear family have to labour under a poor, weak, nervous body; and though it will not be a jot the worse for that at the great resurrection, yet they have to suffer much with it here. And I do not wonder that it is so; for what with one exercise and another, first spiritual then temporal, now this foe then that, with Satan continually at their right hand to resist them, an evil heart of sin, unbelief, lust, vileness, and depravity within them, too often siding with the devil, and all the other host of afflictions against them, it is no marvel that they have a weak and diseased body; and I often wonder how it is that many look so well and are so cheerful, and yet profess to know the path of a child of God. For my part, I confess it is a puzzle to me, and I

cannot unravel it; for God has so ordered it that trial, depression, conflict, and exercise, will tend to weaken the animal frame. I am a living witness to the fact, for I have had to suffer much from it, and have often felt thankful for strength enough to go through a day's work.

But so indeed it is, and many of the family know it as well as myself; and I am sure it will bring a heaven-taught man to a throne of grace, and there will he tell the Lord what a poor "worm Jacob" he is, and how he crawls about from day to day a pensioner upon mercy; how he feels to be sick, and weak, and poorly; how he knows that the Lord can relieve him, and strengthen him, and cure him; how he feels his inability to do it himself, but how he knows the Lord can if he will; and here he "orders his cause, and fills his mouth with arguments," which he would not have done but for his poor body's sake. He thus acknowledges God's sovereignty, and pleads his own helplessness, from an inwrought conviction of his soul.

Thirdly, *Opposition*. The Lord will cause to be felt in the sinner's heart those vile and wretched lusts of his own base nature as shall make him groan being burdened; and then will the Lord lead him to the Rock that is higher than he, and plead for his power to keep him from the dominion of these inward foes. He will be led to cry out in the anguish of his soul respecting these desperate enemies, and feel indeed that he is a "wretched man." He will find that the very thing he hates that very thing he does, and the very thing he loves that very thing he cannot do for the life of him. He "delights in the law of God after the inward man," but finds "another law in his members, warring against the law of his mind;" and this law in his members is the "law of sin." This law works, wars, and battles, and often overcomes, and "brings into captivity;" so that the man is perfectly miserable, and calls himself all the monsters that he can possibly express. It, however, increases his knowledge of his own helplessness; for the blessed Spirit is pleased to show him, under these feelings, more and more of the Lord's sovereign power, and especially his sovereign grace: so that the poor creature says from his inmost soul, "Well, I am such a wretch and such a monster, that I am sure if ever I am saved it *must* be of the free, sovereign, almighty grace of a sovereign Lord;" so that he learns something of the Lord's sovereignty even here.

(To be continued.)

ON COVENANTING WITH GOD.

Taken from "*Memoirs of Halyburton*," when he was under convictions of sin.

* * * These, when added to former discoveries of guilt, gave frequently much disturbance, and cast me into racking perplexity and disquietude. But the darkness and enmity of my mind remaining, I still had recourse to wicked and vain courses for peace; but they afforded me little quiet. Like Pharaoh, I engaged to amend

those things wherein formerly I had failed ; but with him I quickly broke, when the force that drove me to this was over. At last, finding no peace in any of these courses, I resolved to enter into solemn covenant with the Lord; and accordingly I wrote and subscribed a solemn covenant, whereby I bound myself to be for God, like Israel when under the awful impressions of Sinai, and the dreadful appearance of God there. I said, "All that the Lord our God shall say unto us, we will hear, and do it;" and, like the scribe that came to Christ, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest."

When I had once done this, then I concluded all was right. For,

1. I found a sort of a present peace. Amendment I thought sufficient atonement, and such an engagement I looked on as performance. I now said, "I have peace offerings with me ; this day I have paid my vows." •

2. I at this time found frequently an unusual sweetness in hearing the word. Here, as I received sometimes the most piercing convictions, so I received "tastes of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come." Thus, like the stony ground, "I heard the word, and anon with joy received it."

3. Common gifts increasing as light grew, I took them for special grace; and thus took up, with the foolish virgins, the lamp of a profession without oil. I began to set up for a virgin too, and, like such, I began to be esteemed by some of them for that which really I was not, but only appeared to be.

But the merciful and good God would not suffer me to rest here : "Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold! I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned. Why wentest thou about so much to change thy way? Thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt, as thou wast ashamed of Assyria. Yea, thou shalt go forth from him, and thine hands upon thine head; for the Lord hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them." The Lord quickly let me see my mistake. For,

1. The imaginary peace that I had, by making this covenant, was quickly lost by breaking it. Corruption retaining still its power, its locks not being yet cut, whenever a temptation offered, like Samson upon the cry of the Philistines being on him, it broke all those ties with which I foolishly, like his deceived mistress, thought it bound. Like the children of Israel at Sinai, I engaged fairly, and herein thought all right; but when I came to Kibroth-hattaavah, which was the next station in their way through the wilderness, and a temptation fell in my way, I felt a murmuring, loathing the manna, and lusting after the flesh ; and this broke all, the Lord's wrath on this being afresh intimated against me, as it was against them on that occasion.

2. Not only upon such breaches met I with new convictions, but old ones were revived ; and by this I found former accounts still to be standing against me, which filled me with confusion and jealousies of these ways : "For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take

thee much soap, yet thy iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord. The Lord intimated some discoveries of the treachery of my engagements; let me see how my heart was not sound, and how there were secret reserves in my engagements for some sins, from which my heart was not divorced; though yet I remember, that at the time I made those engagements, when my heart put in for sparing these, my light forced me, as it were, for the present, though not without reluctance, to give them up, at least in words; but really I did not do it. Now, the Lord gave some intimations of this heart-treachery, which, when further discovered by the event, my covenant could not quiet me: "They have well spoken all that they have said. O that there were such a heart in them!"

4. The Lord let loose some corruptions, like the Canaanites, to try me; took off the restraints, and then, like water-dammed in, they became more violent and troublesome, and at length bore down all that I had set in their way. By these means, the Lord let me see the fruitlessness and vanity of this covenant, which, however specious, was indeed but a covenant with death. And, by the discovery, I was put into the utmost confusion, while the evil I thought I was provided against came upon me: "From the time that it goeth forth, it shall take you; for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night; and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report. For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than he can wrap himself in it." This I found verified in my sad experience.

Notwithstanding the felt vanity of these legal, selfish, anti-evangelical courses, I still cleaved to them. For,

1. The peace I lost by breaking, I still endeavoured to recover by renewing my covenant, wearying myself in the greatness of my way, and labouring in the fire. My heart, when I was defeated, gave me such advice as the King of Syria got from his servants when he was defeated by Israel: "Number an army like that thou hast lost, horse for horse and chariot for chariot; and we will fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they." I laid the blame still on some accidental defect in my former management: and I thought, were that provided against, all would be well.

2. When still I found something wanting, I cast about in my own mind, and contrived to make it up with something extraordinary of my own, the multiplication of duties, or some such thing or other. "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgressions, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

But still these vain refuges failed me, and my case was truly miserable while pursuing them. "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin: that walk to go down to Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in

the shadow of Egypt. Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the shadow of Egypt your confusion." Now, as I was really miserable in following these courses, so, if the Lord of infinite mercy had not prevented it, I had landed in one of these sad consequences, wherein such exercises and courses often terminate. Either,

1. If I had been freed from convictions, or the Lord had given over his striving with me, and carrying on the work of conviction, after convictions had carried me the length of a form of religion, I had surely, notwithstanding all the disappointments, rested satisfied with that, as having "found the life of my hand," or having, by the endeavours of my hand; and its labours, obtained that which would give me a sort of life. "Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way, yet saidst thou not, There is no hope: thou hast found the life of thy hand, (that is, a sort of life by thy labour,) therefore thou wast not grieved." Or,

2. If convictions had been carried on, and the Lord had left me still to follow those courses I took, I should have "laboured in the fire all my days, wearied and vexed myself for very vanity;" "spending my money for that which is not bread, and my labour for that which doth not profit;" in a continual vicissitude of vows, covenants, engagements, and resolutions; breaches and disquietudes, engagements and false peace; breaches, and racking convictions would alternately have taken place; and thus I should have spent my days, "and at the end been a fool." Or,

3. After I had wearied myself for a while in these vain ways, I should have utterly given up religion as a vain thing, and said, with those mentioned by the prophet, who said, "It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts?" And so, with them, I should have gone over to open atheism and profanity. Or,

4. Being forced to seek shelter for my convictions, and being so often and sadly disappointed by all the ways I tried, I should at last have ended in despair, like Judas, and said, "This evil is of the Lord, why wait I any longer?"—like that wicked being. And in very deed I had some experience of all these issues. Sometimes I sat down with the form, "and judged I was rich, and increased in goods, and stood in need of nothing." Sometimes I wearied myself in running from one of these vain courses to another. At other seasons I turned quite careless, as finding no profit, and was just at throwing up all care of religion, and very often I was on the brink of despair, almost quite distracted.

When I was thus disappointed, especially after making and frequently repeating my vows and my engagements, I was cast into the utmost perplexity to find where the fault lay. I found this way of covenanting with God recommended by ministers as mentioned in the Scripture, and the people of God declared they had found the benefit of it. I could not accuse myself, at least at some times, for known guile in the making of it. What I engaged to do I was resolved

upon at the time. I did engage with much concern and solemnity, and for some time after I walked with much strictness. But though I could not then discern where the blame lay, I have since been made to see it.

1. "Being ignorant of the righteousness of God, I still went about to establish a righteousness of my own." And though in words I renounced this, yet indeed I sought righteousness and peace, not in the Lord Jesus Christ, who "is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," but in my own covenants and engagements; so that I really put them in Christ's stead.

2. Whatever room I in words allowed Christ as to forgiveness for the past, yet my peace and hope of it for the future, and so my trust, was in the evenness of my own walk. I obtained not righteousness, because I sought it "as it were by the works of the law." This neglect of Christ, and substituting my own covenants and obedience in his room, was evident; because, whenever I was under convictions of sin, instead of recourse to his blood, I still sought peace only in renewing my vows.

3. The consent I gave to the law was not from the reconciliation of my heart to its holiness, but merely in compliance with the restraint put upon me by my convictions. But in every deed my enmity against it still continued, and I would not have made it my choice if that had not forced me to it; so that I subjected not myself to it.

4. I engaged to live a new life with an old heart, not being yet made to see "that unless the tree is made good the fruit cannot be good."

5. "The eye was not single;" all I aimed at was self, to be eased of convictions, and obtain peace from the racking disquietudes I was under. I had not the least concern for the Lord's glory, provided I was safe.

6. In a word, I engaged before the Lord had thoroughly engaged me. We may be willing, in some sort, before the Lord has made us truly willing. The first real kindness begins on his side; and we are never engaged to love till the Lord's kindness draws us. The force of convictions may overpower us into some pretensions of kindness. Thus it was with me. Willing I was to be saved from hell, and to have heaven, under the general notion of a good place; but not to be saved in God's way, on his terms, and in order to the ends he proposes in the salvation of sinners.

[Halyburton was a minister of the Scotch church, and died a singularly happy death. His "Memoirs" contain an account of his experience, and are remarkable for two things: 1. The minute dissection of his heart, both as regards nature and grace; and, 2. The singularly happy and pointed way in which he brings forward the Scripture to bear upon almost everything that he advances. Many things in them would now, probably, be considered legal; but he was a man singularly tried and exercised in his soul, and as much blessed and favoured. There is scarcely a temptation of which he does not speak; and no writer with whom we are acquainted more minutely anatomizes the human heart, especially in its first experience of the power and subtlety of sin.]

I AM THE WAY, AND THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE.

Beloved in a Precious Christ,—May his dying love enjoyed be now and for ever the life of thy spirit, even as it is of mine. Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied!

As it is now nearly twelve months since I wrote you the last epistle, and you have sent once and again your kind wishes for another, whereby I do feel comforted to learn that the poor unconnected effusions of a worthless sinner's broken heart are still acceptable to you, I desire now to comply with your wishes, as the dear Lord shall enable me.

Christ the Way, the Truth, and the Life; as it is written, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Let this be the subject of my epistle; the engraving thereof is deeply impressed on my heart.

On rising from my bed this morning, these words echoed through my soul with such divine pleasure as nothing but the joys of heaven can equal; therefore am I constrained to take them as my motto. What I shall be able to draw therefrom I cannot tell; the sequel only can show. I see more beauty in the expression than my contracted abilities can ever set forth. O that I had the gifts and grace of a Paul; the power, and dew, and savour of a beloved Gadsby or Huntington; that I might be enabled to tell unto Zion what great things the Lord has done for me; how I love him, and all the glory and blessedness that I see centring in him; and how I long to dwell and reign with Him above. Ah! did the Lord's dear weaklings but know my feelings, methinks they would not set light by my expressions of love to Jesus, and say I fly over their heads. I do not wish to do so, but must express what I feel, or the very stones would cry out. I have been where they are, though they have not been where I am; therefore I feel for them, bear with them, love them, and would be their servant for Jesus' sake.

"I am the Way," says Christ. So he has been to me for many years in the wilderness. So he is still, and so he will be.

1. *The Way of access to the Father* at a throne of grace. O how blessedly has my soul proved this to be true! At all times he is my only Way unto God, and my only plea at the footstool of sovereign mercy. But more especially at times is he so to me, when the Holy Ghost works faith in my heart with divine power, removing all stumbling blocks out of the way, that my soul presses through every crowd, and in spite of the rage of men and devils, guilt and sin, enters into the bosom of everlasting love, and weeps, and sings, and pleads with God, and loves, and finds shelter and rest in the Munition of Rocks, at Jehovah's sacred feet. O the sweetness of these seasons to me! And how many of them have I enjoyed, and do still enjoy, at home and amidst his dear praying saints, during the silent hours of the night watches and amid the busy concerns of the day! O the tremblings I often feel in approaching unto God! But the hope of thus being favoured still encourages and inspires me to love

and fly to Him at a throne of grace. O the hard bondage that my soul is thrown into oftentimes, because of the workings of indwelling sin and iniquity, and the wanderings of my vain, foolish, forgetful, unthankful, wretched, deceitful heart! Then it surprises and comforts me beyond measure to feel my hard bondage broken and my hardness removed in the twinkling of an eye, my heart made tender, my tongue at liberty, and my soul become calm, serene, bedewed in tears of wonder and love, composed, and joyful. These repeated changes confirm me more and more in the feeling, that it is the work of God in my soul; insomuch that, in my darkest seasons, I do not feel any fear of being separated finally from Christ and the glory of his power. No, my dear brother, how can I? His repeated acts of loving-kindness to me, notwithstanding my manifold provocations and all my unworthiness, still keep my fainting hope alive within my sorrowful breast, and empower me still to cling around him, the dear Christ of God, to lay my soul beneath the droppings of his love and blood, and to come to him still in every time of need for grace, and help, and salvation; and to the Father through him; and that often with a joy of heart to the general bulk of professors unknown.

2. *The Way of conveyance.* This he has been to me also—with melted heart and trembling hand I do now record it—and this he will be to me for ever. There is not a gift or mercy, in providence or grace, which I have received or do receive, but what has flowed and still does flow down from Jehovah's sacred throne above through him, designed in love for me. This sweet persuasion now trembles in my breast. I have proved him to be God and Christ, because he has pardoned all my sins. I know that he has pardoned my sins, because I feel it and the blessed effects thereof. I know the feelings that pardoning mercy brings; for this cause I do bless and praise God for giving me life and being to inherit such untold blessedness. My soul loves him, because he assures my heart that he first loved me. Before he so assured me I could not love him: but now my soul sings with the church of old, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." He commends his love to me, and I do commend myself, my dear partner and children, my life, my all, to him in return. From his fulness I take a living store by faith, and cry with the wondering prophet, "O wheel!" He is God's channel of conveyance from himself to me, and ever will be, and from me to himself again. I go to God in, and through, and by him, and receive from God from, in, and through, and by him; my prayers, my groans, my desires, and my praises, also, ascend to God the same way, through and by him, perfumed with his blood. And his blessing also descends to me again the same way. So I have proved him, and do still prove him to be the only Way of conveyance for all new covenant, yea, and temporal blessings too, to flow from God to me, a worthless, hell-deserving sinner. And as such my soul enters now by faith within the veil, into the holy of holies, with his own blood; and offers up her sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving unto God, in, and through, and by him; and does really love and adore him too.

3. *And the only Way to heaven*, the only place of happiness, according to his own words: "I am the Way." Once I sought, with diligence, with great labour, and many groans and fears, and terrors, and cries, and sighs, another way, but could not find it; till faith in Christ the only Way to God from wrath to come, for pardon, peace, and rest, and to heaven at last, sprang up in my throbbing breast, and pointed me to him for help and salvation; and God the Spirit sealed in my conscience his pardon with atoning blood, and revealed a precious Christ in my heart the Hope of Glory. Until then my soul could not rest; but then all was right well with me, and my soul felt reconciled unto God and to his way of saving sinners forthwith. As soon as I felt his witness within that he had saved me, thenceforth my soul sought no other way of being saved; for God having reconciled me by his death on the cross, and brought me in so feelingly helpless and needy, I did accept of his salvation in his own appointed way, with really felt gladness of heart, and did bless him for his unspeakable gift; and now with these feelings I am blessed still.

4. This Way leads through *much tribulation*, as it is written, "Through much tribulation ye must enter the kingdom." My flesh dislikes the sound, "through much tribulation," but my faith approves it well, as the poet has it. And that word "must" sweetens all. When faith is in exercise, O what a sweet and blessed stress my soul often puts on it! I do not feel any fears or uncertainty of entering the kingdom; yet my confidence is not a vain confidence. A vain confidence puffeth up; but I feel melted down in praise and thanksgiving at my dear Redeemer's feet, and would live and die his servant and witness, beneath the felt distillings of his love. I hate myself, because my flesh dislikes, and rebels against, and frets at, and strives to shun the cross; and I feel a secret something within that would endure it patiently and joyfully at all times, if I could. Sometimes I can; then it is a sweet time indeed, and I begin to reckon with Paul, that "these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are working for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Then my faith grasping a precious Christ, I have the substance of all I hope for, and the evidence of things unseen, which I expect, and which are locked up within my breast. Ah! my friend. I cannot tell you how my soul then glories in Christ and his cross. With Christ in my arms and heart, felt there indeed, I am wont to say with good old Simeon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation," and my soul has felt it too. Painful losses, crosses, jeers and sneers; affliction in body, mind, and soul; trials, the workings of sin within, with the effects thereof, bonds and soul imprisonment; family and worldly cares; the hidings of God's face; the plague of my heart felt within; the ill-will of worldlings and empty professors, and the frowns of hypocrites; all these form the tribulation path I am called to pass through. Therefore let not the Lord's dear weaklings, whom I do love and desire to comfort and encourage, think that God has freed me from trouble or that I am all spirit. Nevertheless, hitherto

bath the Lord helped me, and I trust he will still help me through the final conflict, to shout "Victory" in his kingdom above for ever.

"*The Truth*," as it is also written, "I am the Way, and the Truth." Christ is the Truth, the Essential Truth, the Essential Word of God; the substance of all the types and shadows; the sum and substance of the gospel, of all the promises, of all my hopes, my faith, and my desires. As such I have received him, and he liveth in me. As such I have known and do still know him. As such the eternal Spirit, the Revealer of Jesus, his word, and will, enables me to feed upon and to digest him and his faithful sayings; to know, feel, and understand the mystery of faith in a pure conscience, the solemn, sacred mysteries of the kingdom, the untold blessedness of communion with him, and to contemplate the bliss of dying in his arms and of living and reigning with him above, free from sin for ever. As the substance of all the written word of truth contains, I have eaten him, the true Paschal Lamb, and his faithful and true sayings also, and felt them as sweet as honey in my mouth, but in my belly bitter. The paschal lamb was to be eaten with bitter herbs. "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace." The peace of God is sweet to the taste, though afflictions, crosses, and trials are bitter in the belly. I read of Christ in the Scriptures; but to feel that word come home with divine power into my heart; it is that which does me good. I repeat his faithful sayings, the letter of truth, to God; but when God speaks them home to my heart by his Spirit, it is most blessed. Would I know the will of God, I must know the mind of Christ. Would I know the mind of Christ, I must search the Scriptures, and pray, and watch unto prayer. Would I know the true meaning of the Scriptures, I must lie with them at Jesus' feet, and be their servant for Jesus' sake; the Spirit must make it known to me, in my soul, or I must live and die ignorant thereof. And to live and die ignorant of those truths which are essential to a saving knowledge of God's salvation, where Christ is no one ever can come. Alas, alas, then, for tens of thousands! But glory to God, I feel his Spirit dwelling in my heart. "What cause have you for saying so?" some may ask. Because I feel the Spirit helping my infirmities, oftentimes breaking my hard bondage, applying atoning blood to and in my conscience, revealing a precious Christ in my heart, and comforting my soul with the true comfort of God. As it is written, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted;" yea, "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sin is covered; to whom the Lord will not impute sin, but righteousness without works." O how blessed it is thus to know Christ, and his truth, and his great salvation!

"*The Life*," agreeable to the voice of Israel's great Messiah: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." The Life of all who ever have lived, or who ever shall live unto God and with God. My Life, and

"The life of all my joys,
The life of my delights;
The glory of my brightest days,
And comfort of my nights."

For the divine Spirit hath made him manifestively and feelingly so. "This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." I know the dear Lord Jesus, for I have seen him by faith. I know my Shepherd's voice, when I hear it, for I have heard it by the hearing of faith. I have seen the invisible God in the glorious Person of his Son, Christ Jesus, by faith, for he is the express image of the Father. His love enjoyed is life from the dead. My soul has felt his love, therefore have I eternal life in, through, by, and from him. His words are spirit and life to my soul when he speaks to me. I love to dwell alone, that I may talk to him in secret. O how sweet heaven will be to me, where sin is for ever done away, and I shall see his glories unveiled, and praise and love him as I desire; and all the company will be of the same kindred, joyful spirit to all eternity. My soul now trembles with joy at the sound of his precious name. The theme of the triumphant, redeemed choir above I know, for it is my joy and song in the house of this my pilgrimage, this wilderness below. I am now waiting the accomplishment of God's will in, by, and through me, to sing it above. I shall not die yet, but live to see and feel the wonders God can do. Dissolved in tears, the hopeful witness I feel within; I am a wonder to myself, and shall be the greatest wonder in heaven when I get there. A hell-deserving sinner, a firebrand snatched from Tophet's mouth, and carried above in Jehovah's chariot of love, to live and reign at his side in heaven!

"Wonders of grace to God belong;
Repeat his mercy in your song."

Thus I have written you a few of my feelings and views of the precious words first quoted; and if they feel acceptable and savory to you, it will be well. God is my witness that what I have said is true.

Christ preached in the heart by the Spirit can never cloy; nor will the sinner sick of love to Jesus refuse to hear of him. Since he has gained my affections I cannot live without him. All my springs are in him. "The life that I live is by the faith of the Son of God." "As dying, and behold I live." "As in the world, yet not of the world." Bowed down with many weights, still pressing towards the prize. Living in the sweet hope of dying, yea, sleeping in Jesus; and expecting to rise in him, by virtue of covenant, eternal, and vital union, at the last day, in the resurrection morn. Wherever my sleeping dust may be found it matters not: they who sleep in Jesus God will bring with him. That I may be found in him, and that I may be with him to behold his glory, is the constant cry of my soul.

May all the blessedness recorded in these lines most richly be felt and enjoyed by you and your kind spouse. Our united love to you both in Christ Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,

G. T. C.

Bedworth, January 31, 1849.

SORROW AND COMFORT; OR, CONFLICTS AND TRIUMPHS THE COMMON LOT OF ALL REAL BELIEVERS.

BY JOHN RUSK.

"The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy."—PROV. xiv. 10.

(Continued from page 99.)

I have taken notice of several sources of the bitterness which the heart knows, as sin; God's chastening us for it; oppression; the rivals which God causes to move us to jealousy; distrusting his providence; the danger the church gets in; God hiding his face, and that the new man feels, to be bitter as well as the old man; the tongues of the ungodly; the heart fixed on some idol; ungodly children; the loss of children; the path chequered; and the bitterness that God's ministers feel. These fourteen things I could only hint at, seeing that it is impossible to tell every thing which causes bitterness to a child of God.

Now, all these things *enter the heart*. But what are we here to understand by "heart?" Heart, then, in Scripture is to be understood in various ways. Sometimes it signifies the *conscience*; agreeable to what John says, "If our heart condemn us," &c., that is, if conscience condemn us. And in the same way we are to understand it when David's heart smote him for cutting off Saul's skirts. Sometimes it means the *thoughts*, as when it says, "Mary kept (Christ's) his sayings, and pondered them in her heart." Sometimes the *affections*: "My son, give me thine heart." That is, set your affections on me. Sometimes the *understanding*, as David says, "The meditation of my heart shall be of understanding." But I think that it chiefly takes in the whole soul. Hence God says, "I will give them one heart and one way." "Serving the Lord with all thine heart," that is, with every faculty of the soul. Agreeable to this is the first of the commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and soul, and mind, and strength." And in this sense I understand our text when it says heart, namely soul, because this bitterness is felt in every faculty of it. Yes, its painful effects are felt all over. It enters the heart, or soul, and so we find it.

Sin is keenly felt when God is pleased to quicken us, whether at first or afterwards, when it is charged home. The spirit is wounded; and "a wounded spirit who can bear?" It enters the heart and is keenly felt. This is bitter indeed. Also when God chastens us out of the law, bondage enters the heart; slavish fear, and torment; and we are shut up, bound in affliction and iron, far enough from liberty; our life hangs in doubt, and bitterness is felt; as David, Heman, and Asaph have testified.

Oppression also enters the heart, or soul, and we dread the power which the wicked have, and Satan at the head of them, fearing every day because of the fury of the oppressor; as I have many a time, not knowing how far God may suffer them to go, and being so very

weak in faith. The heart feels it very keenly, and we try all our schemes and plans, but cannot alter it.

Also how bitterly it enters the heart when a *supposed rival* starts up; and God appears for him, and against us in all we do! We have provoked him to jealousy, and now he is provoking us. O this is bitter, heart-rending indeed. This he does sometimes by hypocrites starting up, and sometimes by his own people, whom he enables to be daily rejoicing in him before our eyes, even some who used to be in the back ground. Now we are put back, and they are very happy, riding over our heads. This is bitter, and enters the heart.

Again, the *power of distrust, or unbelief*. O how this enters! We used to take no thought for to-morrow, but now we are all thought. Now it is as though the government were upon our shoulders, and we go on filled with care, and live daily in the expectation of having the word choked. I never could have believed all this as I now do, had I not felt it; for I used to feel so spiritual even when under very sore outward trials. Whereas after this, when not so sorely tried as before, I was filled with this world and with care. Asaph found it so bad that his feet were almost gone. He was envious at the foolish, and so have I been, and at the righteous too. Lord, how bitterly does this enter the heart!

The danger which the church gets in; if it is not so at present, yet fearing that it will. Now, this enters keenly, for we love Zion; and although we often find much coldness, yet not so as that the church should get into suffering times. And really, what can be expected, when in the general (almost universally) a mere form is substituted for the power amongst those from whom we should expect better things, because such do agree with the letter of truth, &c.? Then again, look at the Arminians, or Papists. What a body there is of them! Then infidelity, how that reigns! What liberty has the press got now, which our old king (George III.) did not suffer! And what is worse than all, the divisions there are among real saints about non-essentials; instead of their fighting against the open enemy. (See my book on "Perilous Times.") Now, I say these things will enter the heart, and they are bitter: "If one member suffer, all the members suffer." Say you, God does as he likes, and I cannot say that it troubles me. A very bad sign. You are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph. What notice God takes of them that mourned for Ephraim and restored comfort to them! The Lord deliver you and me from a hard heart!

But again, *when God hides his face*, O how this enters the heart, because every faculty of the soul feels it! We now in our feelings are bitter, for every thing that is good appears gone, and every thing evil comes in its room. And what is the evil? say you. Why, the old man is put on, and we are like Paul when he cried out, "O wretched man that I am!" for he works in all directions, and we keenly feel it. The worst trial or affliction that God's children have is this, when he hides his face. This the Saviour expresses: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

But again, what a sore plague is *the old man* to the new! and this

often enters the heart: "When I would do good"—what then? Why, do it, to be sure, what is there to hinder? Why, this old man, for "evil is present with me." This stops all, and "the good which we would we do not;" and it does not rest there, but "the evil we would not, that we do." I have ere now been all heart and soul for spiritual things, and in one moment, by corrupt nature, been drawn away from it all. O how this will enter the heart!

Again, *the bitter tongues and very hard speeches of the ungodly* enter the heart; for God's children have very keen feelings. "As with a sword in my bones mine enemies reproach me daily; while they say unto me, Where is thy God?" (Psalm xlii. 10.) "For the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips, let them even be taken in their pride;" "False witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty." Indeed, the Psalms are full of it. We read also of just Lot, how his righteous soul was vexed day by day with the conversation of the wicked and their unlawful deeds. Now, although this may go on for years, and it may appear as though God had left the earth and took no notice of it; yet woe be unto such when he takes them in hand! for they are touching the apple of his eye, and the eye is a tender part. Jude tells us of their awful end: "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince (or convict) all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." (14, 15.) Observe, here their character is mentioned four times, and it finishes by saying all is against them.

Again. *When an idol gets fixed in our hearts*, this is a bitter-sweet; bitter to the new man, but sweet to the old. And giving it up is like tearing your flesh from your bones; but you must be brought to this, painful as it is. God will bring you to say, "What have I to do any more with idols?" O what I felt when convinced I was wrong, and yet could not alter it, neither did I want! Truly all our labour, (as considered in ourselves,) from first to last, is to damn our own souls. Ah, reader! it really is so, though so few feel it. Now, all this is charged home and enters the heart; the word of God cuts us when read and when preached, and we are condemned when in conversation with the saints.

Ungodly children, also, are a sore plague to God's family. Some are particularly tried upon this head. All caution, counsel, and advice are lost upon them. And what makes this enter the heart more keenly to them than to a mere professor is, because their faith is firmly rooted in God's decrees, and they well know that nothing unclean, or that loveth and maketh a lie, can enter the kingdom of God; and seeing them take the downward road, and really believing God's word, what can they expect? for real faith is more than an assent and consent. There are none so tender as God's people. Abraham prayed that Ishmael might live before God; and how David mourned and fasted in hope that the child might live! But lastly, the *loss of children*, or relatives. Ah! how this enters! This is bitter indeed; for when the life is gone, then it is all over as respects this world; but while

there is life there is hope. If no appearance has ever been seen in them of God's work, O how the heart will feel it! I look upon it that this was one grand thing with David, when he was so bitterly distressed for his son Absalom; he considered that he was lost, and he having also such strong natural affection for him, these joined together must be keen and bitter indeed: for he died in an awful state, like Balaam, fighting against Christ in his father, who was a type of him. David, therefore, could see no ground of hope whatever; but as for Joab, he was as hard as a stone. But even if our children die in the faith there is much sorrow and grief of heart; for we do not like to part with them. No; yet there is not sorrow without hope. And thus have I briefly run over the fourteen things, and showed how all this bitterness enters the heart.

There are numberless things omitted, I well know; such as a woman, being one that fears God, but joined to a persecuting husband; or a husband to a persecuting wife, as Henry Tanner of Exeter was. Being called to forsake rich relations, when nothing but beggary is likely to follow, and at the same time being very weak in faith, fearing lest we should deny Christ and go over to the world. But although many things may be omitted, yet, if not directly, they are all indirectly contained in what I have mentioned.

I will now come to the second general head, in which I am to show,

II. *The various causes of all real joy, and what this joy springs from, in opposition to a false joy.* This is the more pleasing part of the subject. Now, let it be observed that the groundwork, the foundation of all real joy is, a Trinity of Persons in God. Hence we are told that in his presence there is fulness of joy, and that at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore, that is, in everlasting glory above. What we have here are streams, that flow from this inexhaustible fountain; so that whatever joy we get here below (of the right sort) can all be traced up to God in three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and our eternal union; being united to the true God, as you read: "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." (John xvii. 21.) This groundwork of joy we must never forget; but at the same time, we must take notice experimentally what is the cause of our joy, and whether it agrees with the experience of Bible saints; and as we go on, trace up all to the fountain-head.

1. We then are all (that is, God's elect) *made sensible that we are sinners*; and this is something more than many think. It is wholly God's work to make a man believe that he is such a sinner as God's word says he is; as for the common confession with the lip, "we are all sinners," it is lighter than vanity. Thousands of self-righteous Pharisees say as much as this, who are blind and dead. A man may see that he is a sinner in not going to a place of worship, and likewise the openly profane life that he leads; natural conscience will tell him at times that he ought to alter; which, if he do, and attend to outward things, he will rest satisfied. He can now go to his church or meeting, and, comparing himself with what he once was,

concludes that he is a converted man; and if he be very charitable to the poor, instructs his children, attends to family worship, and acts uprightly amongst men, such a one expects to go to glory at last. But self-confidence is the foundation of all this; he is no feeling sinner. Again, by sitting under preachers and hearing people talk, he gets light and understanding in the letter of truth. This may cause him to shift about from one place to another, and greatly increase in light, so that he may talk well, yea, and soundly; for now he understands the gospel system clearly. But you must not talk to him about experience. And say you, Where now does his faith stand? I answer, It stands in the letter of truth, and he compares himself with Arminians, or any other erroneous characters, and he shines. But this at best is only the kingdom of God in word. Of such were the foolish virgins, the man without the wedding garment, the man that heard Christ's sayings and yet built on the sand, and those that ate their own bread and wore their own apparel, but were called by his name. Once more, a man may go further, and have a false experience, with which he may through bye-ends deceive many, get into churches, &c.; of such were Demas and Alexander, Diotrophes, and many others. And this will go on until God makes them manifest; but none of all these are sensible sinners, not one.

Now, when God the Spirit takes a man in hand, he will give that man light and life, and also an honest heart. This light discovers by degrees every hole and corner in his heart, and terrifies the man; and what he sees this life makes him keenly feel, so that he now is brought to know Adam's fall, and himself in him, experimentally. Thus God lays him open to his own view. Not that the man goes on in sin; O no. He may and does appear quite different in the eyes of others; but God has wounded him, and none but God can heal him; and he is so tender that he dare not tell any thing but truth, for his heart is made honest. He feels that he is under the law, and exposed to all its curses; but after much despair working, he hears about Jesus Christ, and by going to hear, and reading also, likewise conversing with the saints, he clearly understands the truth. But this will not satisfy him. O no; he knows there is a chosen people, and he wants to know whether he is one of them, whether Christ died for *him*. Now, a hypocrite can rejoice in the letter of truth, without the application; but it is not so with God's children, they must have a "thus saith the Lord" for every thing. Well, this man has many sweet lifts and encouragements, but they are short-lived, and then his state and case appears worse; and it ever will, until God delivers his soul, and then he shall be brought from his heart to know what real joy is.

I might enlarge greatly, if I had time and strength, in pointing out how such go on, step by step; and also mention a vast many of the corruptions which they discover, and also their fears. But I have written before of this in my other books; therefore I shall pass on to the first branch or cause of real joy. And it is this, the Holy Spirit testifies to the man that Christ died for him, and that all his sins are pardoned for Christ's sake; past sins, black as they were,

present sins, which he daily discovers, and even all that he may commit to the end of his life, were he to live as long as Methuselah. O how this fires his soul! What, die for such a wretch as I? Surely! Is it possible!

Now, this was Paul's experience; and when he believed that Christ died for him, he set no store on his own life, for his heart was full of love and joy. Hear what he says: "The love of Christ (in laying down his life) constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, (God's elect,) then were all dead." How were they dead? Why, they suffered the penalty of the law in him, and died to it, (to all its demands and commands,) and now are married to Jesus Christ, and will, by virtue of this union, "bring forth fruit unto God." Again: "The Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me;" and, "Now I am ready to die at Jerusalem, for the sake of the Lord Jesus."

Well, as this joy springs from the fountain of Christ's precious blood, take notice what Paul says: "We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom we have now received the atonement." (Rom. v. 11.) I once heard an old minister preach from this text, and he endeavoured to fix the whole of this reception in the judgment, the understanding, the will, and the affections, without showing the hard labour and soul-travail, with the burden of guilt, sin, and filth felt before. So I spoke to him when he came out, and told him that a man must go farther than he had described, before he could be said to have received the atonement. I said, I myself had all that he had described, and yet I felt the burden of sin not removed; and I knew several in the same state. But he did not like it, and turned away. I am sure that it is right to encourage every desire; but to settle in such desires is wrong, and not the experience of Bible saints. Let us look at David upon this head: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies." (Psalm ciii. 1—3.) He felt that his life was redeemed; and how was this done? Paul tells us: "In whom we have redemption through his (Christ's) blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Well, and did this fill David with joy? Yes, it did; hence he exclaims, "My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee, and my soul which thou hast redeemed." (Psalm lxxi. 23.)

(To be continued.)

O what could we bairns do without Christ? How soon should we mar all! But the less of our weight be upon our own feeble legs, and the more on Christ, the strong Rock, the better for us. It is good for us that ever Christ took the cumber* of us; it is our heaven to lay many weights and burdens upon Christ, and to make him all we have, root and top, beginning and ending of our salvation. Lord, hold us here.—*Rutherford.*

* Burden.

THE SINGULAR EXPERIENCE AND GREAT SUFFERINGS OF MRS. AGNES BEAUMONT, WHO WAS BORN AT EDWORTH,* IN THE COUNTY OF BEDFORD, WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

[The following interesting and remarkable narrative contains such a display of the dealings of God in providence and grace with one of John Bunyan's congregation, that though we believe it has several times appeared in print, we have felt induced to give it a place in our pages.]

Since I was first awakened, the Lord has pleased to exercise me with many great trials; but, blessed be his gracious name, he hath caused all to work together for my advantage, and given me occasion to say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." (Ps. cxix. 71.) O how great has the kindness of the Lord been to me in afflictive dispensations; never leaving me without his teachings and comfortable presence when in the midst of them! I have often observed that the more trouble I have had, either from within or without, the more I have found of God's presence, when I have been helped to keep close to him by frequent, fervent prayer; and O how sweet is his presence to a poor soul when surrounded with sorrows on every side!

For my part, I can say with David, "I have found trouble and sorrow." God only knows the sore temptations which I have waded through, some outward, but more inward. O the fiery darts which have been shot from hell against me! But, on the other hand, none knows, but God, that sweet communion and consolation which he hath graciously afforded me in those hours of trouble. I have experienced such comfort and enlargement of heart, such fervent desires after Christ and his grace, as have often made me thank God for trouble, because I found it drove me nearer to himself and the throne of his grace. The Lord has made such seasons praying, heart-searching, and soul-humbling times.

But there is one thing more especially in which I have great cause to admire the goodness of God, namely, that before a trial came, I usually had strong consolation from above, insomuch that I have expected some trouble would ensue, and it has often proved according to my thoughts. One scripture after another would run in my mind for several days together, suggesting something that I was shortly to meet with and prepare for, which has driven me into some secret corner or other, to cry to the Lord to be with me; and O how has he in such seasons, as it were, taken me into the mount! My soul has been so raised and comforted, as if for a while out of the body. Many times in a day has he brought me into his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love; under which indulgence, being still kept in a humble frame, I never was denied the presence of my Lord when waiting at the throne of his grace; which rendered those seasons so delightful, that I longed for their return. It cannot be expressed what sweetness there is in his presence, and in one promise applied by his Spirit to the soul. It turns weeping into

* A village about seven miles from Hitchin, in Hertfordshire.

rejoicing, as, blessed be God, I have experienced in that great and fiery trial of my father's death, which I am now to relate.

About a quarter of a year before the Lord was pleased to remove my father, I had great and frequent enjoyments of God, and he was pleased to pour out a spirit of grace and of supplication upon me, in a very wonderful manner, both day and night. There was scarcely a corner in the house, barns, stables, closes, or hedges, where I did not pour out my soul to God. And sometimes, ere I have risen from my knees, I have been as in heaven, and as if my very heart would break with joy and consolation, which has caused floods of tears with admiration at the love of Christ to such a great sinner as myself! I have frequently wept and cried for joy; at which times some who saw me would say, "Why do you grieve so, Agnes? are you minded to kill yourself with sorrow?" When, indeed, mine eyes were tears of joy and not of grief, flowing from a sense of the love of Christ to my soul. Before the Lord brought this approaching trial, I had many scriptures to show me I had some difficulty to meet with, at which I thought sometimes my heart would sink, but presently I had one promise or another to bear me up. I concluded I had some hard thing to meet with from the following word, which frequently darted into my mind, (Psalm l. 15:) "And call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." Wherever I went this scripture followed me. I concluded it must point at something future, because for the present I found more joy than trouble. Also that word was much on my thoughts, (Isa. xliii. 2:) "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee," &c., with many others of the same nature, in which I saw contained both bitter and sweet.

I had also many dreams, some of which I believe were from God.* In some of them I have had fears of losing my life, or narrowly escaping with it: in others, that men ran after me to murder me. And in some others I have thought myself tried before a judge and jury, and barely came off with my life. One of the dreams was very remarkable, which I told to a friend, who reminded me of it after my father's death. I thought there grew an old apple-tree in my father's yard full of fruit, and one night, about midnight, there came a sudden storm of wind and blew down this tree. At the sight thereof I was sorely troubled, running to it as it lay on the ground, in order to lift it up, that it might grow again in its former place, but though I lifted first with one arm and then with the other, with all my might, I could not so much as stir it; therefore, leaving it turned up by the roots, I ran to my brother and called his men, but when they came they could not replant it; and it sorely grieved me to think this tree should be blown down while others were left standing.

* "For God speaketh once, yea twice, in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed," &c. (Job xxxiii. 14, 15.)

Soon after this dream there was a church-meeting* at Gam'gay;† about a week before which I was much in prayer, especially for two things: the one that the Lord would incline the heart of my father to let me go, which he sometimes refused; and in those days it was like death to me to be kept from such a meeting. I have found by experience, that to pray hard was the most successful method of obtaining my father's consent; for when I have not thus prayed, I have found it very difficult to prevail. The other request was, that the Lord would go with me, that I might enjoy his presence there, at his table, that, as in many times past, it might be a sealing ordinance to my soul, and that I might have such a sight of a bleeding and dying Saviour, as might melt my heart, and enlarge it in love to his name.

The Lord was pleased to grant me my requests. Upon asking my father, indeed, he seemed unwilling at first, but upon pleading with him, and telling him that I would do all my work in the morning before I went out, and return home at night, I gained his consent. Friday being come, I prepared every thing ready to set out. My father inquired who carried me?‡ I told him I thought Mr. Wilson of Hitchin; to which he said nothing.§ I went to my brother's and waited, expecting to meet Mr. Wilson; but he not coming, it cut me to the heart, and fearing I should not go, I burst into tears, for my brother had told me that his horses were all at work, and that he could not spare one more than what he and my sister were to ride on, and it being the depth of winter I could not walk thither.

Now I was afraid that all my prayers on this account were lost; my way seemed to be hedged up with thorns. I waited with many a longing look, and with a sorrowful heart, under my sad disappointment. O, thought I, that the Lord would but put it into the heart of some person to come and convey me thither! Thus I still waited, but with my heart full of fears. At last, quite unexpected, came Mr. Bunyan. The sight of him caused a mixture both of joy and of grief. I was glad to see him, but was afraid he would not be willing to take me up behind him, and how to ask him I knew not. At length I desired my brother to do it, which he did. But Mr. Bunyan answered with some degree of roughness, "No; I will not carry her." These words were cutting indeed, and made me weep bitterly. My brother perceiving my trouble, said, "If you do not

* A meeting of members of the churches for prayer, preaching, and the Lord's supper.

† Gamlingay, a place where some good people lived, who were members of Mr. Bunyan's church at Bedford, and to whom he sometimes went to break bread.

‡ In those days when gigs were unknown, and any kind of wheel-carriage scarcely able to be used on account of the badness of the roads, females who travelled any distance were accustomed to ride upon a pillion behind a horseman.

§ This Mr. Wilson was the first pastor of the Baptist church at Hitchin, and suffered imprisonment for the sake of the gospel.

carry her you will break her heart:" but he made the same reply,* adding, "Your father will be grievous angry if I should." "I will venture that," said I. And thus, with much entreaty, he was prevailed on; and O how glad was I to think I was going!

Soon after we set out, my father came to my brother's, and asked his men whom his daughter rode behind? They said, Mr. Bunyan. Upon hearing this his anger was greatly enflamed; he ran down the close, thinking to overtake me and pull me off the horse, but we were gone out of his reach.

I had not ridden far before my heart began to be lifted up with pride at the thoughts of riding behind this servant of the Lord, and was pleased if any looked after us. Indeed I thought myself very happy that day: first, that it pleased God to make way for my going; and then, that I should have the honour to ride behind Mr. Bunyan. My pride soon had a fall, for in coming to Gam'gay, we were met by a clergyman who knew us both; he looked very hard at us as we rode along, and soon after raised a vile scandal upon us, though, blessed be God, it was false.†

The meeting began not long after we got thither; and the Lord made it a sweet season to my soul indeed. O it was a feast of fat things! I sat under his shadow with great delight! When at the Lord's table, I found such a return of prayer, that I was scarcely able to bear up under it. I was, as it were, carried up to heaven, and had such a sight of the Saviour as even broke my heart in pieces. O how I then longed to be with Christ! How willingly would I have died in the place, and gone immediately to glory! A sense of my sins, and of his dying love, made me love him, and long to be with him. I have often thought of his goodness in his remarkable visit to my soul that day; but he knew the temptations that I was to meet with the very same night and a few days after. I have seen the bowels of his compassion towards me, in these manifestations of his love, before I was tried. This was infinite condescension indeed.

The meeting being ended, I began to think how I should get home, for Mr. Bunyan was not to go by Edworth, and having promised to return that night, I was filled with many fears lest I should break my word. I inquired of several persons if they went my way; but no one could assist me except a young woman who lived nearly a mile wide of my father's house. As the road was very dirty and deep, I was afraid to venture behind her; but at last I did; and she set me down about a quarter of a mile from my home, whence I hastened through the dirt, hoping to be there before my father was in bed; but on coming to the door I found it locked, and seeing no light, my heart began to sink, for I perceived what I was

* A certain person in the neighbourhood, one Mr. F., who is often referred to afterwards in this relation, had slandered Mr. Bunyan, and set her father against him, endeavouring to make his vile calumnies pass for truth.

† This clergyman usually preached at Edworth, the place where he dwelt.

like to meet with. However, I called to my father, who answered, "Who is there?" To which I said, "It is I, father, come home wet and dirty, pray let me in." He replied, "Where you have been all day you may go at night;" and with many such sayings he discovered great anger, because of my riding behind Mr. Bunyan, declaring that I should never come within his doors any more, unless I would promise never to go after that man again. I stood at the chamber window pleading to be let in. I begged, I cried, but all in vain, for instead of yielding to my importunity, he bade me be gone from the window, or else he would rise and put me out of the yard. I then stood silent awhile, and that thought pierced my mind, how if I should come at last when the door is shut, and Christ should say unto me, "Depart!" (Matt. xxv. 10, 11, 12.)

(To be continued.)

LETTERS FROM A FATHER TO A SON.

I.

[A small packet of letters has been sent us, written by a person well known to us by report, and in some slight degree personally, to his son, who since has been removed by death. On the decease of the son, these letters fell into the hands of the friend who has forwarded them to us. The heartiness, warmth, tenderness, affection, sincerity, and spirituality of the first letter will speak for itself. It was written in answer to the first tidings of a work of grace being begun in his son's soul. What those feelings are—the sweet mixture of natural and spiritual affection, the flow of heavenly gratitude, the seeing an answer to many prayers, the blessing in one's own soul—a person must have experienced what is inwardly felt at seeing any dear and near to us made alive unto God, to enter into the warm and tender expressions of the following letter. Such were good old Jacob's feelings when his beloved Joseph "fell on his neck and wept a good while." "Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive." (Gen. xli. 30.)]

My dearly beloved Son in the kingdom and patience of Christ,—We received your first letter quite safe yesterday morning, and the other this morning; but with what joy and rejoicing, and gratitude to God, we all received it, my pen will fail to describe: my eyes flowed, and my soul seemed ready to burst with joy and sympathy, and gratitude to God; nor could I proceed with the reading of it for some time. Ever since I have been something like John Warburton, when his soul was set at liberty in the chapel under some man preaching there. The people nudged him to sit still, "but," says John, "I could neither sit still nor lie still." No more can I long together. If I am at my work, I walk to and fro, and my spirit, in gratitude to the Lord, is almost as absent as though I had neither work nor body present. Nor could I lie late in bed this morning. I arose a few minutes past four o'clock, and went into the fields. The first thing almost that occurred to me after I had opened my eyes, was a precious passage of Scripture which came sweetly to me twelve or thirteen years ago, when in deep waters and hot fires in Walcot Buildings: "They that sow in tears shall reap in

joy: he that goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." O how did a sweet tear relieve my burdened, downcast soul at that time, as I crossed the room to the window! But O, I had no thought then of seeing it fulfilled in the way I think I saw it this morning. When the text occurred this morning, O thought I, that precious text is fulfilled, for here am I rejoicing, bringing before the Lord, as the subject thereof, a sheaf of the fruit of my own body, believing the promise of the Lord by the mouth of Peter is fulfilled: "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to as many as the Lord your God shall call."

The next thing that occurred to my mind was a sweet little prayer in a hymn (which I suppose you had learned at school) which broke forth from your infant mouth when you were a little child in Walcot Buildings. I was lying awake, in the midst of trouble; all at once, in the middle of the night, you broke forth aloud,

"O may I never trife so,
Nor waste the hours that God has given;
But learn my Sabbaths here below,
And spend eternity in heaven."

O how did my soul respond to the prayer of thy little lips! The sweetness and solemnity of "And spend eternity in heaven" that it conveyed to my then poor troubled soul, is what I never shall forget in this world. Yes, my dear child, you have now begun to "learn your Sabbaths here below," and you will "spend eternity in heaven." O blessed state!

When I had read your first letter yesterday, I looked at your dear mother with such a look of spiritual love, that I was ready to bless the womb that bore thee, and the paps that gave thee suck. But I know that "rather blessed are they which hear the word of God and keep it."

O what a cementing, knitting grace is the grace of our dearly beloved Lord Jesus Christ, who died for our sins, and rose for our justification, and ever liveth to make intercession for us! O let him kiss us with the kisses of his mouth, for his love is most sweet. O how many times have I prayed, (when in temptation,) and said, "Dear Father, do hear the sweet intercession of his precious lips on my account, when he prayed and said, 'But that thou wouldst keep them from the evil!'" O how have I and your mother travailed in birth, and prayed for you, since you have been in London! How often have I prayed to the Lord, and said, "O Lord, do let him have to say hereafter,

"When through the slippery paths of youth
With heedless steps I ran,
Thy arm unseen convey'd me safe,
And led me up to man."

Well, my dear child, I do feel confident of this very thing, that he who has begun a good work in thee, will perform it to the day of Jesus Christ.

But I have sadly rambled; just like me. Do pity and forgive me,

for I have gone two or three times to-day after a thing I wanted, and forgotten what I went for. Had a hogshend of sovereigns been sent me, I would count it as nothing compared with the good news and glad tidings conveyed to me in your precious epistles. But I fear I shall have little time or room to answer much of your letter. You seem anxious to know if all this can be working for good? Yes, the whole of it, to a far greater extent than is yet known to you or me, or any one but the Lord. You seem anxious to know if I think a frowning providence can go so far. Yes, and much farther, for "there is nothing too hard for the Lord."

O my dear son, you are taking a wise and safe way, in saying, "May God help me to put my trust in him;" for "they that trust in him shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved." May he bring me to his feet calmly to say, "Thy will be done." O how precious it is for your ways thus to please the Lord, which I perceive is the case, or the Holy Ghost, the dear Comforter, would not visit your burdened soul with such sweet meltings and tears as he does. Blessed be his dear Person, office, and work. With the Father and the Son be praise and glory, in time and through a never-ending eternity. Amen, and amen. "Thou shalt put all my tears in thy bottle," said one; and I thought if I had a tear or two of yours in a little bottle, I would keep them till death. O, then, come boldly to a throne of grace, that you may find mercy, &c.

No more time nor room. Good bye, my dearly beloved,

Yours, &c.,

Bath, June 16, 1841.

J. B.

BLESSED ARE THE DEAD WHICH DIE IN THE LORD.

My dear Friend,—You may have been expecting to receive a line from me, in answer to your last favour; but we were looking, day after day, for a letter from yourself, after we had received your daughter's letter.

When we received the tidings of the death of your daughter, we could not help weeping, and yet rejoicing; so that we thought long to see your letter, to hear a little of the state of her mind and how she departed this life. We were truly glad to hear that you and Mrs. — were so well satisfied that her soul was entered into rest, and that your hearts were filled with joy and gladness, to thank and praise the Lord for his unspeakable goodness and mercy towards yourselves and your dear departed daughter. For if the Lord had not given you some testimony that he had mercy upon her soul, it would have been a trial indeed both to yourself and Mrs. —, and a gloomy house yours would have been for some time to come. But now having a satisfaction that her soul is saved with an everlasting salvation is something for you to remember with gladness and rejoicing; and to look forward to the day when you hope to meet again. O what a blessed death to "die in the Lord," and enter into everlasting rest, to praise the Redeemer for ever and ever!

Dear friend, you said in yours that you did not know what she said to me when I had some conversation with her. She gave me to understand that she felt herself to be a sinner, and knew that she should be lost, if the Lord did not have mercy upon her. I asked her many questions, and she answered them as well as her strength and voice would let her; and when I parted from her, I felt a few words of prayer on her behalf. And the last words that I spoke to her I felt with some weight and power, and was confident that I should never see her again in this world.

O my friend, what a blessed thing is grace, and what a rich soul is that who has felt his sins pardoned and his transgressions blotted out, and his soul freely justified in and through the atoning blood of Jesus; and blest with the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost, and also blest with godly fear, to live to the honour and glory of God! But although the soul has been blest with these living and sure testimonies, yet he often feels as though they were all gone, and fears that it must be a delusion of the devil and of his own heart, or else he would never be in such a dark, careless, dead, barren, lifeless, and hardened state of mind as he feels to be in from day to day; under which he grieves, groans, sighs, and cries to be delivered. And oftentimes, the more he groans, sighs, and strives to feel light, life, and liberty, the deeper he sinks into death and bondage; and he cries and shouts, but the Lord seems to shut out his prayer. But at another time, when the soul is not seeking, nor watching, nor expecting a blessing, and as careless and thoughtless as though there was no soul to be lost or saved, then the Lord breaks in with some sweet invitation, or with some encouraging promise, opens up the sweet mystery of godliness within the heart, leads out the soul after the Lord Jesus Christ, and shows his beauty and preciousness; so that the poor sinner is lost in wonder at the long-suffering mercy, goodness, love, and compassion of an unchangeable God. The Lord put my soul into such a sweet frame on Tuesday evening, and it remained so almost all night, so that my heart was filled with gratitude and thanksgiving to my Lord and Saviour, for I felt that he was my Lord and my God. I could not help singing his praise: and I felt a love to my enemies, much more to my friends. But I had something to try me and my little faith, last week and the beginning of this; but the Lord's blessing weighed it all down, and made my soul rejoice from all my sorrow. And many times since then my soul has said, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee;" and what a sweet thought and feeling "a sinner saved" has been to my heart, and remains so up to this moment! O my friend, to be a redeemed soul is no small mercy, and to be saved from the wrath to come, and never more to come into condemnation, under the curse of the law. "For he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life."

My love to all the friends by name.

Yours in haste,

Woburn, Oct. 26, 1849.

T. G.

A LETTER BY THE LATE JOHN KENT.

Dear benevolent Friends,—I pause over the liberality of my kind friends in the language of poor Ruth, the Moabitish damsel: "Why is this kindness shown to me, a *stranger*?"

Wishing you and my unknown friends at Lewes every blessing of the better covenant, with a rich acquaintance with Him whom to know is life eternal, I beg to subscribe myself your affectionate

Brother in the bonds of the gospel,

Devonport, Aug. 7, 1839.

JOHN KENT.

P.S. In looking over my old papers, I found a scribble, written after hearing a discourse from the 1st verse of the 9th chapter of Proverbs. The subject lying warm on my heart, I sent it to the preacher; and now craving the forgiveness and correction of what may be amiss in it, I send it with due respect to your honoured pastor.

*THE HOUSE OF WISDOM BUILT AND HER TABLE
FURNISHED.—PROV. ix. 1.*

Wisdom had built her house, her fatlings slain,
Mingled her wine, her guests to entertain;
The fatted-calf was on the table laid;
Redeeming love her richest stores display'd.
The good old wine, from Calvary's clusters wrung,
Cheer'd the sad heart, and loosed the stammering tongue.
The cripple danced, and did his crutch forego,
Light as the roebuck on his limber toe;
The sick, the weak, the halt, the blind, the lame
Replenish'd were, and bless'd the Founder's name.
The spendthrift, hungry wretch, at mercy's door;
Was welcomed in, and fed on good old store,
With tears of joy wept o'er his injured Lord,
While holy mirth went round the festal board.
Ring, shoes, and robe, the Father's love reveal'd;
The kiss his everlasting pardon seal'd.
Nor was poor Peter at the feast pass'd by,
Who did with oaths and curses Him deny
Whose tender care the tempter's power controll'd,
When in the sieve of sore temptation roll'd.
Nor was the pardon'd harlot there forgot,
Nor heard with sorrow, "Mary, touch me not."
To clothe the naked, who had nought but sin,
He brought for such the wedding garment in;
But stripp'd the self-sufficient sinner well,
That he could not of his own goodness tell.
Send, Lord, thy fold to bless, such heralds who
Shall make thee Alpha and Omega too.
All and in all, the sinner's only Friend,
Salvation's Author, and salvation's End.

Love is best known and evidenced by the greatness of the Lover, and the loving gifts he bestows upon the object beloved. Here is the greatest gift, evidencing the greatest love: "The Father hath loved the Son, and hath given all things into his hand."—*Ralph Erskine*.

ERRATUM.—In March No., page 107, read Dec. 1845, for Dec. 1849.

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 a 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. 10.

No. 173.

MAY, 1850.

VOL. XVI.

THE LAST DAYS OF JOHN KNOX, THE GREAT
SCOTCH REFORMER.

(Concluded from page 115.)

After this interview with the session, he was much worse; his difficulty of breathing increased, and he could not speak without obvious and great pain. Yet he continued still to receive persons of every rank, who came in great numbers to visit him, and he suffered none to go away without exhortations, which he uttered with such variety and suitableness as astonished those who waited upon him. Lord Boyd came in and said, "I know, sir, that I have offended you in many things, and am now come to crave your pardon." His answer was not heard, as the attendants retired and left them alone. But his lordship returned the next day, in company with the Earl of Morton, and the Laird of Drumlanrig. His conversation with Morton was very particular, as related by the earl himself before his death. He asked him if he was previously acquainted with the design to murder the late king.* Morton having answered in the negative, he said, "Well, God has beautified you with many benefits which he has not given to every man, as he has given you riches, wisdom, and friends, and now is to prefer you to the government of the realm. And therefore, in the name of God, I charge you to use all these benefits aright, and better in time to come than ye have done in times by-past; first, to God's glory, to the furtherance of the evangel.

* Darnley, husband of Mary Queen of Scots, and generally supposed to have been murdered by the Queen and her paramour, Bothwell.

the maintenance of the church of God and his ministry; next, for the weal of the king and his realm and true subjects. If so ye shall do, God shall bless you and honour you; but if ye do not, God shall spoil you of these benefits, and your end shall be ignominy and shame."

On Thursday the 20th, Lord Lindsay, the Bishop of Caithness, and several gentlemen visited him. He exhorted them to continue in the truth which they had heard, for there was no other salvation, and besought them to have nothing to do with those in the castle.* The Earl of Glencairn (who had often visited him) came in with Lord Ruthven. The latter, who called only once, said, "If there be anything, sir, that I am able to do for you, I pray you charge me." His reply was, "I care not for all the pleasure and friendship of the world."

A religious lady of his acquaintance desired him to praise God for what good he had done, and was beginning to speak in his commendation, when he interrupted her. "Tongue, tongue, lady! flesh of itself is over proud, and needs no means to esteem itself." He put her in mind of what been said to her long ago, "Lady, lady, the black one has never trampled on your foot," and exhorted her to lay aside pride, and be clothed with humility. He then protested, as to himself, as he had often done before, that he relied wholly on the free mercy of God, manifested to mankind through his dear Son Jesus Christ, whom alone he embraced for wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. The rest of the company having taken their leave of him, he said to the Laird of Braid, "Every one bids me good night, when will you do it? I have been greatly indebted unto you, for which I shall never be able to recompense you; but I commit you to one that is able to do it, the eternal God."

On Friday, the 21st, he desired Richard Bannatyne to order his coffin to be made. During that day he was much engaged in meditation and prayer. These words were often in his mouth: "Come, Lord Jesus. Sweet Jesus, into thy hands I commit my spirit. Be merciful, Lord, to thy church which thou hast redeemed. Give peace to this afflicted commonwealth. Raise up faithful pastors who will take the charge of thy church. Grant us, O Lord, the perfect hatred of sin, both by the evidences of thy wrath and mercy." In the midst of his meditations, he would often address those who stood by in such sentences as these: "O serve the Lord in fear, and death shall not be terrible to you. Nay, blessed shall death be to those who have felt the power of the death of the only begotten Son of God."

On Sabbath, 23rd, (which was the first day of the national fast,) during the afternoon sermon, he, after lying a considerable time quiet, suddenly exclaimed, "If any be present, let them come and see the work of God." Richard Bannatyne thinking that his death was at hand, sent to the church for Johnston of Elphingston. When they

* The insurgents in favour of the deposed Queen, then a prisoner in England.

came to his bedside he burst out in these rapturous expressions: "I have been these two last nights in meditation on the troubled state of the church of God, the spouse of Jesus Christ, despised of the world, but precious in the sight of God. I have called to God for her, and have committed her to her Head, Jesus Christ. I have fought against spiritual wickedness in heavenly things, and have prevailed. I have been in heaven, and have possession. I have tasted of the heavenly joys where presently I am." He then repeated the Lord's prayer and creed, interjecting some devout aspiration at the end of every petition and article.

After sermon, many came in to visit him. Perceiving that he breathed with great difficulty, some of them asked if he felt much pain. He answered that he was willing to lie there for years, if God so pleased, and if he continued to shine upon his soul, through Jesus Christ. When they thought him asleep, he was employed in meditation, and at intervals exhorted and prayed. "Live in Christ. Live in Christ, and then flesh need not fear death. Grant true pastors to thy church, that purity of doctrine may be retained. Restore peace again to this commonwealth, with godly rulers and magistrates. Once, Lord, make an end of my trouble." Stretching his hands toward heaven, he said, "Lord, I commend my spirit, soul, and body, and all, into thy hands. Thou knowest. O Lord, my troubles: I do not murmur against thee." His gracious ejaculations were so numerous, that those who waited on him could recollect only a part of them; for seldom was he silent when they were not employed in reading or in prayer.

Monday, the 24th of November, was the last day that he spent upon earth. That morning he would not be persuaded to lie in bed, but, though unable to stand alone, rose between nine and ten o'clock, and put on his stockings and doublet. Being conducted to a chair, he sat about half an hour, and then went to bed again. In the progress of the day it appeared evident that his end drew near. Besides his wife and Richard Bannatyne, Campbell of Kinyeancleugh, Johnston of Elphinston, and Dr. Preston, three of his most intimate acquaintances, waited by his bedside. Mr. Campbell asked him if he had any pain. "It is no painful pain, but such a pain as shall, I trust, put an end to the battle. I must leave the care of my wife and children to you, (continued he,) to whom you must be a husband in my room."

About three o'clock in the afternoon one of his eyes failed, and his speech was considerably affected. He desired his wife to read the 15th chapter of the 1st Corinthians. "Is not that a comfortable chapter?" said he, when it was finished. "O what sweet and salutary consolation the Lord hath afforded me from that chapter!" A little after, he said, "Now, for the last time, I commend my soul, spirit, and body (touching three of his fingers) into thy hand, O Lord." About five o'clock he said to his wife, "Go read where I cast my first anchor;" upon which she read the 17th chapter of John's Gospel, and afterwards a part of Calvin's Sermons on the Ephesians. After this he appeared to fall into a slumber, during which he uttered heavy

groans. The attendants looked every moment for his dissolution. At length he awoke as if from sleep, and being asked the cause of his sighing so deeply, he replied, "I have formerly, during my frail life, sustained many contests and many assaults of Satan; but at present that roaring lion hath assailed me most furiously, and put forth all his strength to devour and make an end of me at once. Often before has he placed my sins before my eyes, often tempted me to despair, often endeavoured to ensnare me by the allurements of the world; but with these weapons, broken by the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, he could not prevail. Now he has attacked me in another way; the cunning serpent has laboured to persuade me that I have merited heaven and eternal blessedness by the faithful discharge of my ministry. But blessed be God who has enabled me to beat down and quench this fiery dart, by suggesting to me such passages of Scripture as these: 'What hast thou that thou hast not received?' 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' 'Not I, but the grace of God in me.' Being thus vanquished, he left me. Wherefore, I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ, who was pleased to give me the victory; and I am persuaded that the tempter shall not again attack me; but, within a short time, I shall, without any great bodily pain, or anguish of mind, exchange this mortal and miserable life for a blessed immortality through Jesus Christ."

He then lay quiet for some hours, except that now and then he desired them to wet his mouth with a little weak ale. At ten o'clock they read the evening prayer, which they had delayed beyond their usual hour, from an apprehension that he was asleep.

After they had concluded, Dr. Preston asked him if he had heard the prayers. "Would to God," said he, "that you and all men had heard them as I have heard them! I praise God for that heavenly sound." The doctor rose up, and Mr. Campbell sat down before the bed. About eleven o'clock he gave a deep sigh, and said, "Now it is come." Richard Bannatyne immediately drew near, and desired him to think upon those comfortable promises of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which he had so often declared to others; and, perceiving that he was speechless, requested him to give them a sign that he heard them, and died in peace. Upon this he lifted up one of his hands, and, sighing twice, expired without a struggle.

He died in the sixty-seventh year of his age, not so much oppressed with years as worn out and exhausted by his extraordinary labours of body and anxieties of mind. Few men ever were exposed to more dangers, or underwent such hardships. From the time that he embraced the reformed religion, till he breathed his last, seldom did he enjoy a respite from these, and he emerged from one scene of difficulties only to be involved in another and a more distressing one.

Obliged to flee from St. Andrews, to escape the fury of Cardinal Beatoun, he found a retreat in East Lothian, from which he was hunted by Archbishop Hamilton. He lived for several years as an outlaw, in daily apprehension of falling a prey to those who eagerly sought his life. The few months during which he enjoyed protection

in the castle of St. Andrews, were succeeded by a long and rigorous captivity. After enjoying some repose in England, he was again driven into banishment, and for four years wandered as an exile on the Continent. When he returned to his native country, it was to engage in a struggle of the most perilous and arduous kind. After the reformation was established and he was settled in the capital, he was involved in a continual contest with the court. When he had retired from warfare, and thought only of ending his days in peace, he was again called into the field; and although scarcely able to walk, was obliged to remove from his flock, and to avoid the hatred of his enemies, by submitting to a new banishment. Often had his life been threatened; a price was publicly set upon his head; and persons were not wanting who were disposed to attempt his destruction. No wonder that he was weary of the world, and anxious to depart. With great propriety might it be said, at his decease, that he rested from his labours. On Wednesday, the 6th of November, he was interred in the church-yard of St. Giles. His funeral was attended by the newly elected regent, (Morton,) the nobility who were in the city, and a great concourse of people. When his body was laid in the grave, the regent pronounced his eulogium in the well known words, "*There lies he who never feared the face of man.*"

SORROW AND COMFORT; OR, CONFLICTS AND TRIUMPHS THE COMMON LOT OF ALL REAL BELIEVERS.

BY JOHN RUSK.

"The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy."—Prov. xiv. 10.

(Continued from page 136.)

2. Another cause of real joy is, *justification by faith* in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. And of all the happiness, comfort, and delight in religion which there is, this I am sure of, that nothing whatever can exceed this; and for this very reason, because God takes a person and shows him his lost and ruined state. And when he sees and feels himself the vilest of the vile, and only fit fuel for hell, he in a sovereign way, through Jesus Christ's obedience to the law, pronounces the sinner just: so that the man is not only pardoned all his sins and iniquities, which were infinite, but he is reinstated into every blessing due to obedience, more so than he would have been had he stood in Adam, and never fallen. Now, then, in the eye of a heart-searching and rein-trying God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, such are perfect; and God the Father views them so in his dear Son. This indeed is wonderful. Hence you read that he justifies the ungodly, not *in* ungodliness, but *from* it. Joshua, the high priest, was one that experienced that change, and he is called a brand plucked out of the fire. The poor publican was another. He dared not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." And

how did he succeed? Why, God heard his cry; for it was from his heart, put up in faith, believing that he was a sinner of the deepest dye, and believing that God, through Christ, did show mercy to such sinners; thus he went down to his house justified; justified freely from all things, a righteous and saved person in Christ Jesus. Look, again, at the prodigal. He declares that he had sinned against heaven and in God's sight. Well, then, he is condemned by his own confession, if we go upon the law of works; and yet the best robe is brought out and put upon him, that is, Christ's righteousness; for "by his obedience shall many be made righteous." Look, again, at the thief on the cross, a wicked sinner, justly condemned by the laws of his country, and with the other thief reviling Christ; but that very day he is admitted as a righteous person into glory above, to be with Christ. How can that be, some may say, when Paul declares that "the unrighteous shall not enter the kingdom of God," and the Scriptures cannot be broken? I answer, In no other way is it possible than through Christ's righteousness imputed. God, therefore, finished the work, and cut it short in righteousness. Once more, the church, by the prophet Isaiah. Hence she says, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord." Take notice of that little word *in*; she does not say *of* the Lord, but *in*. There is the union. "Surely shall one say, *In* the Lord have I righteousness and strength." But she goes on, "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 jewels." (Isa. lxi. 10.) Now, here is a foundation for real joy, when you and I can in heart and truth believe that we are pardoned and justified.

3. Another cause of real joy is, *a saving knowledge of our eternal election*; and the way that this is brought about is by blessing us with the spirit of adoption, so as to call God our Father. Say you, This does not appear a hard thing. For the Pharisees told Christ, "We have one Father, even God." Yes, but what answer did he make to them? Why, "Ye are of your father the devil, and his works ye do." Well but, say you, I have heard men in a prayer meeting say this over and over again, and it was easy enough to them. All this may be. There ever were and ever will be hypocrites in Zion; but for a truly convinced sinner in faith to lay claim to this is such a great work as nothing short of the power of God can perform in such a man. To speak for myself, I was in a sad plight just before, burdened and distressed with sin and guilt, but I was trying to sing a hymn along with my wife, and was singing,

"Gold in the furnace tried,"

when I felt all at once very great meekness, and it kept increasing. My hard heart gave way, and I longed to go to prayer, and to call God my Father. So I got up and knelt down, and I broke out saying, "Thou most propitious Father in Christ Jesus," and then went on praying with the spirit of grace and supplication. O what

an alteration did I find! All my misery and wretchedness were now gone, and I went on in prayer in such quietness, peace, and joy. If you can at all times and upon all occasions lay this claim, I should rather conclude it to be head work, and not heart work. Well but, say you, if it is so, that God is our Father, and he ever did bless us with the Spirit of adoption, is it not true that he always is so? for his gifts and calling are without repentance. Although this is really true what you have said, yet a child of God cannot always lay this claim; because, when God hides his face he does not see it so, and he cannot bear to rush on. Upon the same ground I would argue, Does not the Scripture say, "Rejoice in the Lord at all times, and again I say, rejoice?" Well, there is cause at all times, then, to rejoice. "All times" takes in when at a distance from God or nigh to him, when backsliding, cold, barren, dead, worldly, lifeless, &c. Now, how can we *then* rejoice? Well, but is there not the same foundation for it? Truly there is. Yet we cannot do it, either in public or private; neither can we always call God, Father; and therefore it requires a divine power not only at first, but every time, to lay this claim; as it is written, "But to as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God," &c. It does not mean that they were not the sons of God before. O no; but this power to lay the claim proves to them that they were predestinated to the adoption of sons from all eternity. Again, "How shall I put thee among the children, and how shall I give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of the nations?" and the Lord tells us the way he will do it. "Thou shalt call me, My Father, and shalt not turn away from me." Now, as it is impossible always to live near him without turning away, so it is impossible to lay this claim when we have turned away. I am speaking of such as attend to heart work, and none else. As to people running on like a parrot, that is just nothing at all. Now, here is a solid foundation for real joy. The Holy Trinity sat in council on our behalf from all eternity; but we (God's elect) all fell alike in Adam; and although our election secures our safety even when fallen, yet we are in the fall upon a level with the reprobate, for we are all alike by nature children of wrath, and no man living can tell who are elected or not; but God makes this manifest in his own time, by sending his Spirit into their hearts, and after effectually convincing such of their lost estate, as I have already shown, he blesses them with power to claim God as their Father in the new covenant. Take notice of what Paul says: "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." This is attended with a two-fold witness, the Holy Spirit and the conscience: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ."

First, We have the Spirit's witness: "And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit, which he hath given us." (1 John iii. 24.)

Secondly, Conscience: hence Paul says, "My conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost." (Rom. ix. 1.)

Faith brought into exercise on the finished work of Christ, brings all this into lively action and exercise: so that, as John says, "He that believeth hath the witness in himself," and then you may see what real joy springs from, namely, election manifested unto us. "Rejoice not because the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

4. *Salvation.* Real joy springs from salvation manifested to us. Ah! say you, it is a great thing. I often sing,

"Salvation, O the joyful sound!"

Yes, it is a great thing; and you may sing that hymn over, for a precious hymn it is. But what do you know about being lost? O, say you, we are all lost in Adam, and all saved in Christ. Ah! my friend, that will not do; you and I must come nigher home than all that. Neither is what you say true; for we are not all lost in Adam, take the meaning of the word lost which way you will.

First, If you take it to be *irrecoverably* lost, God's elect are exempted here. Again, if you take it to be a feeling sense of our lost estate, the reprobate never were here; because Christ never came to save them, whereas he "came to seek and to save such as (sensibly feel they) are lost." No, say you, but I mean, we have all gone astray like lost sheep. Well, I say, We have not, in the sense David speaks, and in the proper sense too; for such a man feels that he has departed from God. Whereas all are not lost in this sense of the word; for we read of some saying they never transgressed God's commandments at any time, so that they never erred and strayed like lost sheep. Such go to church with a lie in their mouths. Neither are all saved in Christ, for it is only Israel (spiritually) that shall be saved in the Lord.

You see you are unroosted, and all you have said is false; so you had better leave off singing that hymn. When God makes his elect feel that they are lost, he quickens them, and applies his holy law; this is also attended with the true light, and is in general a work of time; and by degrees their faith believes every threatening in his word. Neither can such apply one promise to themselves; and you may try all you can to raise such up, and it is right you should; but yet you cannot do it. They shall hear the gospel preached in all its fulness, by a minister of the Spirit, again and again; but then they are fast bound, shut up, and deaf to it all; they may read what God has promised over and over again, and good books; and people, as I say, may converse with them and tell them that they exactly answer the commission of Christ; but it takes no hold. I have travelled this path, reader, and therefore can describe it; and such a one sinks according to the strength or weakness of his faith. If his faith be but weak in the justice, holiness, righteousness, immutability, and terrible majesty of God in the law, he will not sink so deep; but if God give him much light in the word, and a strong faith also in the justice, holiness, &c., of God in his law, he will sink greatly. Some have been lost to all business for a time; some have lost their ration-

ality for a time, for such really believed they were lost to all intents and purposes. But, say you, did not Francis Spira and John Child, and do not apostates often come here, and sink in such a state as you are describing? No, never. Wherein, then, do they differ? I answer, At intervals God's elect have a cry in their hearts for the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. They are fast bound; yet they do cry. But hypocrites cry not (to the Lord) when he binds them.

Again: God's elect are made honest, as I showed a while back; but these hold fast deceit, they refuse to return. John Child never called in that wicked book he had written, although he well knew that to be the cause of his despair. Again, God's elect are brought to justify God even in their condemnation. They are quite sure that if God send them to hell, he is strictly righteous in so doing; but not so the reprobate. Wisdom is justified only of her children; their unrighteousness commends the righteousness of God. Again, they are made willing to be saved in God's way, and would put their mouth in the dust, if so be there might be hope; not so the hypocrite. Hence King Saul, in his worst calamity, thirsted after his own honour: "Honour me but this once before the elders of Israel." God's elect come after him in chains, &c.; but the hypocrite runs away: "They return not to the Most High," &c. The one comes to the light, although he expects to be consumed. See Job: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." But the other hates the light, and will not come to it. He never prays, "Search me, O God," &c. Say you, I have heard all that you say about the difference, and still I fear that I am a reprobate; for at times I feel what you say a reprobate does. Yes, you may at times, and you do well to say, at times. But when God casts *them* down, they feel it at *all* times. For God's children have sometimes, for a short space of time, little lifts and encouragements: "They are holpen with a little help," and have a little reviving in their bondage, nothing of which the hypocrite or apostate has. That you feel at times as they do I doubt not, because your heart is exactly the same as theirs. We are all alike in our fallen nature, and it is God showing you your own heart, and all the holes and corners of it, that makes you tremble, for fear he should execute the sentence. But he will bring you out of all this to his honour and glory, and fill your heart with joy. I cannot believe it, say you; but that will not alter it, for "our unbelief shall never make the promise of God without effect," and that is a great mercy.

But I will now come to the joys. You see that bitterness and joys both belong to God's family. It may be that you have waited long, and therefore you conclude that such good and great blessings never can come to you. But are God's promises to come to nought because of your unbelief? No; he declares that "the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing," &c. (Isa. xxxv. 1, 2.) Now, I really think that these two verses are promises made to God's ministers, and therefore they shall feel what a wilderness state is again and again;

what a solitary state is; what a deserted state is also; and what a dark state of soul is. But why go so far into the back ground? I answer, For the good of the church. And when God's time is come to raise up some who have been in a bowed and dejected state a long time, fearing they are quite lost, then God pours out his Spirit, first, on the ministers: "The wilderness and solitary place (or ministers) shall be glad for them," *i. e.*, for the church; and he then tells them to "strengthen the weak hands," &c., and to say, "Behold, your God will come and save you." Agreeably to which Paul says, "Whether we be afflicted, (with wilderness, solitary, deserted, or dark feelings, let it be what it may, for I endure all things for the elect's sake,) it is for your consolation and salvation; or whether we be comforted, we are made glad for you." Well, here is a promise that he will come and save such, and when he does come, such will know it and rejoice.

If you look narrowly into the 25th chapter of Isaiah, you will see that five things are experienced when such are brought to rejoice in God's salvation: 1. They feasted on Christ crucified; 2. The veil was quite removed; 3. The fear of death; 4. All rebuke and reproof; and 5. All contending with them ceases; and then they say, "This is our God; we have waited for him, &c. We will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." They say, "This is our God;" but why do they say so? Because no one can ever cause such a change in any soul as is then felt but the living God.

First, to cause a soul to feast upon Christ, he takes "the yoke from the jaws," and sets this meat before them, saying, "Eat, O friend."

Secondly, It is he and he only that can destroy this veil by turning us unto the Lord, and shining in our hearts; wherein we see the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, It is he that removes a guilty conscience, which is the sting of death, by applying the atonement, and then the fear of death goes, and we say, "O death, where is thy sting?"

Fourthly, He removes all rebuke by the Spirit's witness, which silences every accuser we have.

Fifthly and lastly, He leaves off contending or finding fault with us: "In this mountain (Zion) shall the hand of the Lord rest." Such may well rejoice in his salvation; for now they clearly see that they are saved from the reigning power of sin that has destroyed millions. They are saved from the curse of a broken law and the wrath of God. They are saved from Satan, so that he cannot finally hurt them, and from every other enemy, and lastly, from the second death.

Here is victory, here is salvation, here is a solid ground for real joy. Cheer up, poor soul, for there are glorious days yet to come, and therefore, "for confusion you shall rejoice in your portion," which is the Lord himself, for he is the portion of our souls. "He will come and save you." Look at God's church, how she breaks out with this joy, saying, "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, and therefore I will greatly rejoice in the Lord;" and again, "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." And then mind the joy: "Therefore (as he is my salvation) with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation," &c. These wells are a Trinity of Persons in the one Jehovah who had saved her, and she rejoices in it. I do not know a more precious chapter than that 12th of Isaiah in all the book of God. And now she is delivered from God's anger and from all slavish fear. But it may be asked, Does this always continue? Answer: No, not in the enjoyment of it by any means. Hence David prays, "Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation," &c.; for you and I shall have many changes. Yet as to the reality of it, it is the same; and as to the foundation and source whence this joy comes, that is the same; and at last we shall return and come to Zion (triumphant) with songs of everlasting joy upon our heads."

(To be continued.)

PEACE PROCLAIMED BY THE GOD OF PEACE.

BY THE LATE H. FOWLER.

"Peace! peace! to him that is afar off and him that is nigh, saith the Lord; and I will heal him."—ISAIAH lvii. 19.

The first war that disgraced human nature was commenced against the God of heaven and earth through the influence of Satan. Man, the most noble of God's creatures, became the most ignoble, by trampling under foot the mandates of heaven, and "turning to him the back, and not the face." Conscious of his guilt, how could he look *Him* in the face, against whom he had so awfully rebelled? "And he sought to hide himself among the trees of the garden." As if a covering of thick-grown, bushy trees could conceal him from the eye of Him who is all eye! The same evil appears in Adam's children, who say, "God seeth us not, neither knoweth us." "The adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me."

God's eternal decree had no immediate influence on Adam's fall; he was left to the freedom of his own will, and made a voluntary choice; he, therefore, fell from his created purity, and became the habitation of darkness and spiritual death. With a mind polluted by sin, a will filled with rebellion, Adam, and consequently all his posterity, waged war with the eternal God: "By the offence of one many were made sinners." "The carnal mind is enmity against God." In this we perceive the root of all human misery; manifesting itself in wars, tumults, contentions, lust, pride, adultery, covetousness; and in every other thing which is contrary to holiness and God. To this source we trace all the various miseries we behold, and all the miseries recorded in sacred and in profane history; which sweeps, like a pestilential wind, through every clime, through every land. So that the world may be fitly denominated "the habitation of cruelty."

Let a man take a view of past ages, or cast his eye over the present dark world, and, with the Bible as his guide, he must come to this conclusion: "The elect hath obtained salvation, and the rest

were blinded." Were it not for the sovereign, electing love of God, all men would live and die alike, without a hope and without God. But his sovereign decree selected from eternity out of the mass of mankind a seed to serve him, who are to be "accounted to the Lord for a generation." And in the time appointed these are brought to a real feeling of their lost condition by the fall of Adam, and to a true sense of their situation as under the curse; feel their minds enmity against God; nor is it in their power to bring about a reconciliation. Yes, O my soul, this was thy condition; nor hadst thou a desire for heavenly things, or the least understanding of their nature or worth. The freedom of thy will manifested itself in the choice of all evil, in a direct opposition to all that is really good; in a hating of the light and the children of light, and yet vainly imagining thou hadst a capacity to turn, and repent, and serve God acceptably. Contemplate, O my soul, that rich, that astonishing grace that made thee to differ, and for ever lay thy mouth in the dust; and when thou beholdest the greater part of mankind in spiritual darkness and death, let thy unceasing language be, "Why me, Lord? why me?"

"Why was I made to hear his voice,
And enter where there's room?
While thousands make a wretched choice,
And sooner die than come."

God is the God of peace; in his own eternal mind he conceived it, when there was no man; "according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself." He is the most blessed fountain, out of whom and by whom any of the guilty sons and daughters of Adam are blessed. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." But what the Lord has conceived in his mind must be made known. The purest fountain sealed up would benefit no one. The richest mine of gold would enrich no one unless penetrated. Now, in order that the living fountain might flow, and the riches of his goodness be possessed, a *covenant of peace* was entered into by the three Persons in the incomprehensible Jehovah. "I have made a covenant with my* chosen; I have sworn unto David my servant." All the riches of eternal grace centre in Jesus, and flow from Jesus, the sinner's Friend: "The law came by Moses; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." He is the Prince of peace; he hath made peace by the blood of his cross; and when his peace is applied to the conscience, it purges away guilt, the fear of death, and dread of hell.

* This by no means sets aside the Holy Spirit from being a party in the covenant. The Holy Spirit is the speaker by David: "The Spirit spake by me." "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost." Jesus received the public sanction of the Holy Ghost: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me." The man who can embrace and publish the doctrine, that the Holy Spirit is not a party in the covenant, has swallowed a large portion of Sabellianism; and it might be found, if closely examined, that he has embraced many more dangerous errors. In general, men who speculate in the doctrines of the most Holy Trinity, wax worse and worse. Better to be an idiot than possess what such esteem wisdom.

Peace is a glorious proclamation made from the throne of God and the Lamb; and the opening of this proclamation is the gospel, which is called *the ministry of reconciliation*: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." Now the sum and substance of the gospel is Christ; he is declared to be the Law-fulfiller, the Bringer-in of righteousness, the Offering for sin, the true Propitiation as well as the Messenger of the covenant, to open and declare the particulars of the covenant of peace to all the children. "And I will give unto Zion one that bringeth good tidings." And these are some of the tidings which Jesus brings, by the word of the gospel and by the testimony of the Spirit—that "he hath finished transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness." Consequently the Father is well pleased, and his justice for ever satisfied; for he was bound by his own perfections to justify the perfect doings of his well-beloved Son. "It is God that justifieth." And in this act of justification, all the elect are included as much as Christ himself was, they being in him by inseparable, eternal union. All the virtue of Christ the Head becomes the inalienable right of his seed, who are "blessed in him!"

Now, it is from this union which we have with Christ that all our peace and all our healing come. Much is said in the Scriptures about *healing*; but Christ possesses a knowledge of the healing art, and he makes good his promise in "healing all manner of diseases."

Christ heals by his word the wounds of a guilt-stung conscience. His word he makes powerful; and suits his promises to the nature of our diseases. So that his word is as effectual as his presence. "Only speak the word," said the centurion, "and thy servant shall be healed. And his servant was healed the self-same hour." (Matt. viii. 8—13.) Even so is it in a spiritual sense. Christ speaks the word to the heart; "he puts his hand in by the hole of the door, and drops some of the sweet-smelling myrrh upon the handles of the lock," as the spouse speaks; and hence sweet and heavenly consolation flows into our hearts, which is the soul's true prosperity and health. "He sent his word and healed them." The dear Redeemer came "to bind up the broken-hearted," and by the preaching and reading of his gospel he does it. He gives us faith to mix with what we hear; and by faith we receive the virtue; nor is there any other way of hearing or reading well. "He healeth all thy diseases." "By his stripes we are healed." "I am the Lord that healeth thee."

I LOOKED FOR HELL, HE BROUGHT ME HEAVEN.

My dear Sir,—I had fully proposed writing to you before, but have not been permitted to do so.

When I returned from S— I was very poorly with a bad cold; and the first Lord's day I was home I had a serious fall, which injured me considerably. I feel the effects of it now, and fear that it

will not soon wear off. I thought it a mercy that no bone was broken; but instead of being thankful, I felt such peevishness and rebellion arise within me as made me very miserable indeed.

For a considerable time before I went to S—, the Lord's dealings had been wonderful towards me, and I was more favoured than I had been for years past; I had such sweet and blessed testimonies as I could not expect; no, nor did I ever expect such sweet meltings in my soul as the Lord has in his great mercy granted me to enjoy. I thought I had so provoked him that I should have to spend my days almost in darkness; and sometimes my faith was terribly shaken, and slavish fear would then pervade my soul. At other times, I was enabled to believe and hope that my soul's salvation was certainly fixed and settled in and by the dear Redeemer. As for real comforts and consolations from the Lord, my poor soul enjoyed but very little indeed, year after year, and I am certain that there is no part of the Bible that I experimentally understood more than Isaiah lix. 2.

None but those who have travelled the same road can conceive how I have sunk under my dreadful, heavy burden at times. I have been certain that my cursed sins have gone up to the very heavens, and have brought down the vengeance of God on my ungodly inventions. I have at this very moment abundant reasons to believe that I am a child of God; but this I am certain of, that he has visited and punished me for my sin. I am sometimes astonished that I am not in hell; but what wonder and astonishment has filled my soul when I have enjoyed the foretaste of heaven, with the sweet assurance of being soon in bliss and glory, to enjoy the blessedness of it to all eternity! O my dear sir, this is indeed worth living and suffering for, yea, and dying for too.

In September last the Lord was pleased to favour me with such a night as I never before spent on the earth. One of the children being ill, I had a room to myself; and indeed I could but admire the wisdom and goodness of God in this respect. I went to bed in a very dejected state of mind, but it did not continue long. The Lord, in his infinite mercy, appeared; and O what a sweet view had I of a blessed God in covenant, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! I could really converse with the holy and blessed Trinity, with such solemnity, reverence, and freedom, as I never could with a saint on earth. When I went to bed I was very tired, having been very much exposed to hard labour in the day. But my sleep was entirely taken from me the whole of the night, and I never felt more refreshed in my body than I did the next morning. From that time I felt as if I could bear almost anything; and those burdens which I had been labouring under, yea, burdens which were not removed, were made exceedingly light.

About a fortnight before I went to S—, I was seized with a violent attack in the bowels, in a field not far from the house of one of the members of our little church; such a terrible sickness, cold sweat, &c., attended the pain, that I felt as if it were impossible to crawl to my friend's house. I went, but how I cannot tell. I began

to consider whether this might be for death, and if so, what ground I had to stand on; and I shall never forget the precious view which I then had of my dear Saviour, and of the power and virtue which I felt in his most sweet atoning blood. While I write it, indeed, I have a small measure of the feeling; but O then I could have gladly fallen into his blessed arms, and have died in the bliss of the mercy I found. My dear friend, in whose house I was, and who knows something of the joys and sorrows of a Christian, witnessed something of the blessed state of my mind. He really thought I was going to die, and envied my state.

When I began to write I had not the least idea of speaking of these things, but it came to my mind, and I could not avoid it, and I hope you will excuse it. Glory to the dear bleeding Lamb!

Many times have I feared that my poor labours have been all in vain, but I trust that it has been groundless; and believe that there are living witnesses in proof of it. But when I am left in the dark, as I have been very often, and have been tempted to think that I have never had the least authority to speak in God's great name, and have really questioned my soul's conversion, racked and torn with slavish fears, O what miserable and wretched feelings have I been the subject of!

I should feel glad of a few lines at any time, if you have a disposition to write. Please remember me kindly to Mrs. —, and believe me, my dear sir,

Yours affectionately, for the truth's sake,

T—, Jan. 3rd, 1850.

S. D.

IN THIS TABERNACLE WE GROAN, BEING BURDENED.

Dear Friend,—Your kind and welcome epistle I was very glad to receive, and desire to feel thankful for its contents. At the same time I was not a little surprised to find your stay so long in L., which appears to have been occasioned by the many comforts you have received; which may the Father of mercies and the God of consolation continue with you, and fill you with joy and peace in believing.

Before my departure from town I seemed somewhat favoured with a prayerful and believing heart, a lively hope, and a faith working by love, which continued with me almost a fortnight; and I felt a hope that through the remainder of my journey there would be more light, life, and gladness. But O my inconstant soul soon has forgotten prosperity. Preaching and prayer have been such a burden, and my heart, I think, never appeared more barren in prayer. I have often felt as if I could not say another word, and have frequently been tempted to get up from my knees and give it all up. And my preaching has appeared so formal, dull, and cold, that I have thought at times the folks must be asleep, or they would never sit it out. This has gradually come upon me, and I have been gradually backsliding in

heart, and so filled with my own ways, that I am often a burden to myself.

O the returning power of sin! what havoc it makes of my comforts! and my deep-rooted doubts, what hold they take of the soul! And they seem to alarm conscience with such force that the soul is filled with consternation, and the new man of the heart groans through afflictions, and mourns without the sun. I pass day after day in this miserable state, whilst the devil is suggesting infidel thoughts, and strikes hard at the castle of the heart, trying to burst the door, and demolish the stronghold of godly fear and longing hope. Desire seems to fail, and everything appears as if it would come to nothing in the soul. Past experience seems nothing, and as if one had never had any. And the thought of dying an infidel uppermost from morning until evening, and from evening until morning, makes the soul as ill as Job's poor body was; and we have no power to take the prescriptions given. It is true, I can read them, and so can a natural man; and he can get as much from them as I seem to do at times. And I can relate the tale to you, and not mourn the state before God.

O the ruin of sin—I mean the ruin of men by it—how great it is! I endeavoured to state some of its effects in corrupting our nature, last Wednesday, at a village called F., but found it such a bog as to exceed all thought of measurement, both in breadth, length, depth, and height, yet bounded by Almighty Power. God's wrath is revealed against it; his justice rains eternal fire upon it. Sin is the devil's hunting park, and God has walled it round. Jesus Christ entered into it without the proprietor's leave, and so surprised the devil, vanquished sin, destroyed death, and brought life and immortality to light, that, were it not for the devil's iron hoop, my soul would tumble to pieces in thankfulness.

I am glad to see you in that state, evidently a vessel of his mercy, fitted for the Master's use, and prepared to every good word and work. And whilst it is well with you, remember my bonds.

I remain, yours, in hope of a better state,

Dicker Common, Oct. 31st, 1846.

W. C.

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

• He that hath slight thoughts of sin, never had great thoughts of God. (Psa. l. 21.)—*Owen*.

Here is ground of encouragement to the faith and hope of sinners, that all things are given into such a wise hand; even His who is the wisdom of God, and knows how to give out of his treasures, and when and in what measure: "His understanding is infinite." He is a God of judgment, and blessed are all they that wait for him." (Isa. xxx. 18;) for "he waits to be gracious." He waits the best time, and therefore we would do best to wait his time, and we shall find it to be the best: "He that believeth maketh not haste," knowing that wisdom dwelleth with God.—*Ralph Erskine*.

THE LORD KNOWN BY HIS JUDGMENT.

(Continued from page 120.)

II. I now come to show how the Lord teaches his people that he is a Sovereign by the judgment which he executes in them, *by exercising his graces* in times of trouble.

Now, I will take five of the graces of the Spirit, and attempt to show, first, What they really are when in true and lively exercise; and then show with each grace, how the soul that watches the Lord's hand is led to see the sovereignty of the Lord in the exercise of that grace. The five graces that I propose to take are these: *faith, hope, patience, submission, and prayer.*

1. *Faith.* The exercise of true faith in the hearts of the children of God is purely supernatural, hence it is called "the faith of the operation of God," (Col. ii. 12,) because it can only be exercised by God. Hence, the possessor of it is again and again brought to see the absolute necessity for the grace of faith to be exercised in him by the hand of him who is the Object of it. And it is of sheer necessity that it should be and must be so; for it has to deal with dark appearances, gloomy aspects, and contrary circumstances. It will grow on no other soil, and thrive on no other ground; for he that is dating his conclusions according to the dictates of bright and promising appearances, is not walking by *faith*, but by *sight*; for the apostle sets these matters as they really are in experience, and that is, that they are opposed the one to the other. "We walk," he says, "by faith, not by sight." (2 Cor. v. 7.) Hence, when we believe we shall have this, that, or the other, because the appearances of things enable us so to decide, this is not the faith of his operation; but it is a natural faith; and natural faith is neither more nor less than sight; and sight is the opposite to right and proper faith.

God has so ordered it that faith shall have nothing to rest upon but his own naked, sheer, bare word—his word and his word alone; so that the first thing the Lord does after he gives a soul a promise, is to strip it of every refuge in strength and reason, bring clouds, darkness, and opposition on every appearance, wrest from it every circumstance from which it may *reasonably* conclude the Lord will fulfil his word, and leave the soul nothing but his own word to depend upon. And if the soul is then led to believe, in contradiction to every appearance and reasonable conclusion, that he shall have the promise fulfilled, I will venture to say that that faith is of the operation of God; for nature, sense, and reason cannot produce it, as they are all against it.

When this faith is in true and lively exercise, circumstances and appearances of things have no effect upon it at all. Bright appearances do not enable it to believe any the firmer, nor do dark appearances shake at all its firmness. They are all nothing to it, for it is depending on *the word of God*: it has the Almighty Jehovah for its Object, whose faithfulness is pledged to give it all its requirements. And seeing all events and circumstances in his omnipotent hand, she

laughs at every foe, while she holds most firmly the word of her faithful God.

“Faith, precious faith the promise sees,
And looks to that *alone*,
Laughs at impossibilities,
And says it shall be done.”

Nor will she give up, though she may be denied her request again and again; she still holds fast, and holds on, till her requirements are answered. It may be months, it may be years, but she will still stick to the promise; and as sure as God is faithful, she will one day get the fulfilment.

Now, this faith fixes upon the *faithfulness of God*. She believes that he is the “rewarder of them that diligently seek him;” and that he will perform all that he has said he would. “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it?” (Num. xxiii. 19.) This is faith’s strong hold, and here she fixes. Opposition cannot beat her down; unbelief cannot make her give way; Satan cannot make her give up; contrary circumstances cannot alter her tone. She says, “The Lord hath purposed it, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?” (Isa. xiv. 27.) With this “new sharp threshing instrument having teeth” (Isa. xli. 15) does she “thresh” every “mountain” of opposition, and “beat them small, and make the hills as chaff, and the wind carries them away, and the whirlwind scatters them;” and the poor soul “rejoices in the Lord, and glories in the Holy One of Israel,” (Isa. xli. 16,) as the operator of this “precious faith.” (2 Peter i. 1.)

When faith is thus in lively operation upon the faithfulness of God to bring to pass the fulfilment of his own word, and so give faith her requirements, it brings the promised blessing so near to the soul, that it feels to have the blessing already in possession, though there may not be the least appearance of it according to sense. Hence it is that the apostle speaks of faith as being the “evidence of things not seen.” (Heb. xi. 1.) Sight fails, because it can see nothing but as reason dictates; but faith enters within the veil, fixes on the faithful word of God, and believes she shall have what the soul hopes for, (Heb. xi. 1,) simply because God has said it shall be so. Hence faith is believing God’s word, (which is utterly impossible for sense to do,) for “Abraham believed God; and being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah’s womb; he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded, (here was where his faith fixed, mark that,) *being fully persuaded* that what he had promised, (though contrary to sense,) he was able also to perform.” (Rom. iv. 19—21.) This was how faith in Abraham held the promise of God; but sense said, “Shall a child be born unto him that is a hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?” (Gen. xvii. 17.) Here sense calls in question the faithfulness and verity of God, by judging according to appearances,

and looks not to his power to perform his own word; but faith, being opposed to sense, rises up above it all, and fixes on the word of God alone, "being fully persuaded that what he has promised he is able also to perform." (Rom. iv. 20.) Hence the poet was right, when he said of God,

"He is strength, and can fulfil;
He is truth, and therefore will."

Faith also uses the same language, and so glorifies God. (Rom. iv. 16.) Faith having thus to deal with contradictions and seeming impossibilities, I do not marvel that the apostle Paul called it the "*mystery of faith*;" (1 Tim. iii. 9;) for in very deed it is a mystery, that no natural man can ever fathom. And the mystery of it consists in its operation being *supernatural*: or, in plainer terms, nothing short of the sovereign work of God, not only in the first implantation of it, but also afterwards, in every moment's exercise thereof; for well assured am I, that though I, by the faith of the operation of God, hold most firmly a promise for months and for years, (though this is rare,) yet, when God withdraws his sovereign hand, which secretly held, moved, actuated, and guided this faith, that moment should I fall to doubting the thing which I so firmly held before, and call in question the truth of the matter altogether. This is the working of unbelief, which a child of God, apart from grace, is alone able to exercise. And the Lord often lets his people (for the trial of their faith) see, and feel too, something of this; that they may know whence their faith comes, and who feeds and keeps it alive; that they may see his sovereignty in the exercise of his own grace, and so learn something of him by the operation of his hands; which I now come to consider a little.

That this, which I have feebly attempted to describe, is the true exercise of faith, I question not at all; but the children of God do not generally have it for long together in exercise in this way in their hearts; the exercise of it there, though of this quality, is of but small measure, and generally for a little time, and this is from the opposition which faith meets, and which is for the *trial* of it. Touching the exercise of it, it may be but as a moment's time, in the midst of a day of gloom and trial; but still it is the same in quality, and rises up again and again, after meeting with fresh and fresh attacks of its opposers, and will one day triumph over them all; but still the *trial* of it is *trying work* while it is going on; it is said to be "*tried with fire*." (1 Peter i. 7.) And "can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?" (Prov. vi. 27, 28.) How much less, then, can one go in the midst of the fire, and not feel it? Trial must be *trying*, or it is no trial at all. The fire of trial must *burn*, or the dross will not be purged off, and a pure faith brought forth. And it is in this "*trial of faith*" that the soul is led to see the sovereignty of the Lord as the operator and feeder thereof.

First, *Contradicting appearances* try faith. When the Lord first gives a soul a promise, and faith to lay hold of it, there may not seem much opposition to its being accomplished: but soon some difficulty arises by the Lord's own work in providence or grace, which

seems to startle the soul, and make it think that the promise will not be accomplished; it seems to be a blow upon the head of faith, and the soul cannot now even stammer out its confidence as it did before: faith seems to hang her head, and is not strong enough to bear up against such a seeming contradiction. The soul feels its faith to fail here, and is stunned, as it were, at the disappointment. He expected all to go on smoothly till "the end of his faith" was accomplished, but it is not so; and if he is rightly led, he will be brought to see that the Lord is the operator of this faith in him; and, as He is almighty, can strengthen this faith to believe his own word, however circumstances may oppose it. This prayer the Lord will answer, and enable him to believe, against all hope in sense, and so in the matter of faith perform that promise: "As thy days, so thy strength shall be." (Deut. xxxiii. 25.)

Thus faith is made equal to her opposers, be they what they may; and the soul is led to see how the Lord has, in his sovereign grace, strengthened and fed his own faith in the heart of his child. But perhaps not many days have passed before a darker shade is added to the picture, a more gloomy appearance than ever is presented to view; and faith, not being strong enough for a new opposer, again hangs her head. The poor soul runs to the same Friend again for assistance and for new strength, but does not get it so speedily as he did before. This brings fresh exercise, and the mountain of opposition swells bigger and bolder every hour, so that the poor soul "reels to and fro," (Ps. cvii. 27,) and knows not what to do; but if led aright, his eyes will still be unto the Lord, till he gets the needed relief, which he shall surely have, for "the Lord will regard the prayer of the destitute, and will not despise their prayer." (Ps. cii. 17.) This poor soul feels to be destitute of every mite of faith; and when it comes, will regard it as the free-grace bounty of his sovereign Lord, and will glorify him with his own grace.

And in this way will the Lord lead the soul on, raising up dark circumstances and contradicting appearances again and again, and strengthening faith again and again accordingly, till faith be brought out of the fire, manifestively to the soul that hath it, as the sovereign, free-grace gift of our blessed Jesus in every moment's exercise thereof. This the soul will see, feel, and acknowledge. And here will he learn somewhat of the Lord, in the exercise of his grace; and give glory to him to whom it is due.

Secondly, *Sin* tries faith. A child of God has not a path to tread which is hedged up on the one side only, but it is hedged up on *both* sides, and while he is trying to escape the thorns on the right, it is well for him if he do not feel them pricking on the left. When he is perhaps going on pretty comfortably in faith, believing the promise which the Lord has made to him, (for I am supposing such a case,) the devil will try in some way or another to trip him up. He will "go round about Zion, and tell the towers thereof, mark well her bulwarks, and consider her palaces." (Ps. xlviii. 12, 13.) And wherever he sees a tower the least shaky, there will he besiege. Well enough does he know the deadening effect of sin, and if he can but

succeed in tripping the soul up here, he knows what a breach it will make in the soul's confidence respecting the Lord's promise; it will becloud the promise, weaken faith, shake confidence, and mar the soul; therefore he will labour hard here. The children of God need to be upon their watch-towers when faith is in lively exercise, or Satan will mar the grace by sin. Christian, have you a besetting sin? watch at this breach of your bulwarks, for the devil will sure to be at you here. Well, and in an unsuspected moment he often gains his end. Faith draws back from a circumstance like this, as a man would from a scorpion, and when looked for cannot be found. The soul is then put in a worse plight than it was before, for it not only feels its destitution of faith to hold the promise of God with, but from the sense of his sin, feels his unworthiness of such a great blessing, and is brought in the issue, though much conflict has to be gone through first, to plead with the Lord for faith to be communicated again, through his own free sovereign favour; he confesses his sin, and feels more than ever the freeness of the gift of faith.

Thirdly, *Temptation* tries faith. Satan takes care to lose no opportunity of trying to overthrow the faith of God's people. When adverse circumstances arise, and seem to startle the soul, and to becloud his faith, Satan will be sure to have something to say upon the subject; he will make it appear darker than it really is, and tell the poor soul that if God intended to give him what he has been expecting, he would not raise up such circumstances as those. He will then tempt the soul to disbelieve all about it, to think no more of the subject, and give all up; and this he will do in such a way as for the poor soul not to have a suspicion that the suggestion comes from the devil; but Satan will so manage it as to make the man think the suggestion is that of an honest conscience, or the fear of God, or anything but himself, and so he will make the man wonder what to do, for faith will not give up, though she does not seem able to go on; in the issue, however, though the soul may be tried some time first, he will be led to cry to the same source for fresh faith, and to watch the Lord's hand in the giving of it. Here they learn and are more confirmed in the sovereignty of the Lord, in the exercising of this grace.

This trial of faith, viz., by temptation, is, however, the same old well-beaten path of apostles and prophets, though it is no easier now than it was then; Satan did not leave them alone any more than he does us. Peter wrote about this to his saints: "Though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith (here was the object, in the sight of God, of their temptations) being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory," &c. (1 Peter i. 6, 7.) Here we see, as well as in our own heart's experience, that temptations try faith, and these temptations bring *heaviness*: "Ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations;" now, we know that "heaviness in the heart of a man maketh it stoop," (Prov. xii. 25,) and the soul is then in a right position to have "a good word," which "maketh him glad;" and

when this "good word" comes, it will bring the needed thing and strengthen the soul's faith; and the good word will be the following in effect, if not in words: "Awake, awake! put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem; shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem; loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." (Isa. xlii. 1, 2.) In these words there will be power, and the soul will gladly obey: "And when I saw it I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake, and he said unto me, Son of man, *stand upon thy feet*, and I will speak unto thee; and *the Spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet*, and I heard him that spake unto me." (Ezek. i. 28; ii. 1, 2.)

(To be continued.)

A CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN MR. HUNTINGTON AND A FRIEND, RESPECTING THE SPIRITUAL MEANING OF EZEKIEL xlvi. 9.

"But when the people of the land shall come before the Lord in the solemn feasts, he that entereth in by the way of the north gate to worship, shall go out by the way of the south gate; and he that entereth by the way of the south gate, shall go forth by the way of the north gate: he shall not return by the way of the gate whereby he came in, but shall go forth over against it."

TO MR. HUNTINGTON.

I have received your epistle, for which I feel more thanks in my heart than I have words to express. I believe I shall ever remain the greatest debtor you have; and I am sure I shall never be able to pay one mite towards it. But I know the Lord will return you fourfold; because he has said, "Whatsoever ye have done unto one of these my little ones, ye have done it unto me." You have never yet denied me any one request I have made; the consideration of which emboldens me to come to you again with some difficulty which I have upon my mind. I told you, in my last, that what you mentioned in your former letter of "the latter rain" which was to come on the believer at death, had, in some measure, released my mind from some fears which I had been long harassed with. I thank you for enlarging on the subject. Indeed, the matter lay with much weight on my mind. You mention this passage, viz., that the righteous have bands in their death; and that these shall be the last fetters that shall be broken. I am in the dark what these bands are; but it seems they are to snap at a dying hour. But yet you call the work that is to be done on the soul at that time the greatest work of all. Is it not strange, then, that my mind should be again brought into bondage under the fear of death? You told me, in a former letter, that we were travelling in the same path; but, indeed, I think it is otherwise now. But you must judge when I give you an account of my present feelings. And one thing in your letter confirms me in it, viz., where you say that the daily cross, which is intended to counteract the devices of Satan, the workings of the old man, and the pleasing desires of the flesh, is not all you

expect in the course of your pilgrimage ; but that you expect some familiar visits, fresh love-tokens, confirming renewals, and promised revivals of the good work of God, even unto the end. This is the place where I seem to turn out of your path ; and, indeed, I have at present no such things in expectation. And it seems to me that I am confirmed in this by the word of God. The passage I refer to is recorded in Ezekiel : " But when the people of the land shall come before the Lord in the solemn feasts, he that entereth in by the way of the north gate to worship, shall go out by the way of the south gate ; and he that entereth by the way of the south gate, shall go forth by the way of the north gate ; he shall not return by the way of the gate whereby he came in, but shall go forth over against it." (Ezek. xlvi. 9.) The latter part of this verse seems to comprehend my past experience, my present feelings, and my future path, and has involved my mind in much darkness and gloominess ; and I am led to believe that I am more interested in the mystical sense of this passage than any one upon earth. It is this text that has cut off all my expectations of future enlargement while in this world ; which is also confirmed to me by what Mr. Hart says in one of his hymns :

" Their pardon some receive at first,
And then, compell'd to fight,
They find their latter stages worst,
And travel much by night."

The above passage in Ezekiel has been on my mind for this twelve-month past, and I have thought that there has been a great depth in the words ; but they never brought any difficulty on my mind till about a month ago, when it forcibly struck me that I was so much concerned in them ; and I have also many things to confirm me in it. You have told me, and so have others, that the Lord has dealt with me in a singular manner, both with respect to the degree and duration of those spiritual joys and consolations which I have been favoured with in times past. And what inference can be drawn from it but that which is meant by coming in by the south gate, and that I am no more to return by the way of the gate whereby I came in, but am to go forth by the way of the north gate ? And I believe that north and south gate mean the same operations as the north and south wind. Will you grant me this request also, that is, to give me your thoughts on the passage ? I do assure you it is not a matter of curiosity. I do believe you will sympathize with me, and feel for me, and pray for me. This seems to be the sharpest trial I have lately had ; though, blessed be the Lord, I feel no shakings or uncertainty respecting my state. But I have at present no light on my path ; and, to my dark understanding, that text has made a discord in the word of God, and seems to clash with such passages as this : " The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day ;" and this also : " They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength : they shall mount upon wings as eagles ; they shall run and not be weary, walk and not faint." But instead of this my expectations are of more

darkness, sharper trials, being perpetually under the hiding of God's face; and, indeed, I am already in the dark path. May the Lord give you something for me that shall bring my mind forth from out of these dark regions; for I seem held fast where I am, and that with a strong hand. Believe me to remain as much as ever,

Your affectionate friend, but unworthy sister in the Lord,

THE ANSWER.

Your last is now before me; and I have just as much right to thank you for it, as you have to thank me for mine; for if anything of mine may cast a ray of light on thy mind, or on thy path, I am often rewarded in answering thine by some fresh thoughts, or new discoveries, which are often attended with devotional sensations, which melt my soul down, and draw out my gratitude to the best of all friends.

“The wicked have no bands in their death, their strength is firm.” But remember it is their strength. Satan, who blinds their eyes, and keeps their conscience asleep, is the strong man armed, that fortifies their carnal mind, and supports their false confidence and vain hope, even when launching forth into the bottomless pit. These, our Lord tells us, lift up their eyes in hell, and never before. But we, my dear sister, are plantèd together in the likeness of Christ's death, as well as in the likeness of his resurrection, and must indeed drink of the cup that he drank of. And it is well known that he had bands in his death; for Christ was a bond-servant under the law, as appears by the thirty pieces of silver, which he was sold for; which was the price to be paid, according to the law, to the owner of a bond-servant who had been gored to death by the horns of a beast. Read and compare Exod. xxi. with Psalm xxii. and Zech. xi. 12. The Saviour's worst bonds were our sins, his Father's wrath, and the powers of darkness. When the prince of this world came to him to bruise his heel, these deep waters entered his soul, (Psalm lxix. 1,) besides the insults of the Jews, and the excruciating pains of his body. But all these pains of death were loosed, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. (Acts ii. 24.) Our worst bonds are the corruptions of our own heart, the law in our members, and the inbred sin that works in us, and will work in us as long as we live. These often make us halt, faint, and stumble; and often betray us into a spirit of legal bondage, and procure us many chastisements, many spiritual desertions, and much fatherly anger. And these sensible suspensions of divine favour, these frowns, stripes, and bondage, when sanctified, are intended to purge the branch, that it may bring forth more fruit. Not a few of these purging draughts have fallen to thy share already in the short course of thy pilgrimage; and when humbling grace operates, how are our sinful stirrings subdued, how are they detested, and for a while out of sight, when sweet love, meekness, contrition, godly sorrow, self-abhorrence, unfeigned faith, and abounding hope, much peace and divine tranquillity, all appear uppermost in the soul, and make it look like a bride adorned with her jewels. This, my dear sister, is what I

mean by bonds in the saints' death. These corruptions will stick by us to the last, and Satan often works sadly in them and by them; and it is generally seen, though not always, that the child of God on his death-bed is not a little exercised with them; as it will be even with the wise virgins when the midnight cry comes. An alarm will go forth; then they will rise and examine themselves, and there will be a little purging work go on upon them; some sharp reproofs, some melting and humbling trials; and then a restoring of them to the joys of the Lord's salvation. Trimming of lamps consists in wiping them out, cutting off the burnt snuffs, pouring in fresh oil, and lighting them up, that the light of their righteousness may rejoice, when the lamp of the wicked is put out. But the creature, the new creature, the whole mystical body of Christ shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and be brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God; for this is the earnest expectation of every new creature in Christ Jesus. For this creature was made subject to vanity, or death, (Gen. iii. 19., Eccl. iii. 19, 20;) not willingly, for death is not desirable in itself; but God has subjected us to it in hope, that our souls may be delivered from all corruption at our departure out of this world; that we may have hope of glory in death, and leave the body to rest behind us, in hope of a glorious resurrection, which will be the last work of hope in this world. Thus we must hope to the end, and no longer; for what a man seeth himself in full possession of, why doth he yet hope for?

But because I told you in my last that I expected some familiar visits, love-tokens, confirming renewals, and promised revivals, in the course of my pilgrimage, even to the end, as well as a daily cross, I have staggered you; and in the expectation of these things, you say you seem to turn out of my path. No, no, my sister; I ran to the same extremes that you do. When in my first love; I said, and believed it too, that I should never be moved from the mount, the Lord of his goodness had made my hill so strong; but when spiritual desertion came on, and Satan returned with double rage, and every inherent corruption was stirred up, attended with legal bondage and slavish fear, I then concluded as Job did, "My days are swifter than the weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope; O remember that my life is wind, my eye shall no more see good!" (Job vii. 6, 7.) David was wrong in his exultation, for God hid his face from him. Job was wrong in his lamentation, for the Lord appeared to him clearer than he ever did before. I was wrong also; for I have had hundreds of visits since I drew these sad conclusions. And you are wrong, for he will revive and renew his work in the soul, and bring it to light, and confirm you in it again and again: "They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine, and spread forth their roots like Lebanon." If they revive, there must be more life; if they grow, there must be more grace given; and if they spread forth their roots, their love must be drawn forth, for we are to be rooted and grounded in love; and if we are to root like Lebanon, we must be strengthened, established, and settled this way.

But you inform me that you have no such expectations, and that

you are confirmed in your opinion by the word of the Lord itself. The passage you allude to in Ezek. xlvi. 9, you do not rightly understand. That the temple spoken of in that chapter was a type of the church of God under the New Testament is plain, for the church bears the same name; that all the furniture of the temple, in its gospel signification, is now found in gospel Zion, cannot be denied: that there are such things as north and south winds, which blow on the Lord's garden, I hinted to you in a former letter; likewise I mentioned Solomon's trees, which he represents as falling toward the north and toward the south, and of their unalterable state after they are fallen; and no doubt but that the north and south gates that you allude to have the same signification. Suppose a poor sinner is seized with a spirit of bondage to fear, and wrath and guilt work in him till his soul is chilled, and he filled with fear and trembling: this is the north wind, the spirit of bondage, which is the wrath of God. But at length he is enabled to fly from the wrath to come, and to embrace the hope before him; and he exercises faith on the Saviour, and comes sensibly into his favour, into his grace, and into his finished salvation. He then passes from death to life, and shall never more come into condemnation. He enters by the north gate. Christ to him is the gate of life, and the end of the law for righteousness. His faith now works by love; and as loving-kindness is never to be taken from him, he shall go out at the south gate. But then, what is or can be meant by going out of the church? Why, in one sense, the believer never can go out at all; for he that overcometh is made a pillar in the temple of God, and he shall go no more out. Going out, therefore, can mean nothing but a being translated from the militant to the triumphant church by death. Moreover, suppose a person at his first setting off in a profession, is allured and drawn into it by a sense of God's goodness, and a believing view of his kind providence, as Hezekiah was, and as Job seems to be; and the north wind, or a spiritual bondage, falls upon him, as it did upon these two men, that they might see the handwriting that was against them, and that they might know the sin of their heart by the application of the law; this alters not the state of their souls; they were members of Christ before; so they were when in their troubles; and they were more sure of this when their deliverance came. It remains, therefore, that it cannot in the worse sense mean a real believer; for though he may be exercised in his pilgrimage and on his death-bed with legal bondage, yet he cannot go out of the church and out of the world under the wrath of God, nor yet in bondage; his end must be peace, not wrath. The covenant, the oath of God, the promise of life, the death of Christ, and the Spirit's work, all forbid this. To conclude this subject, in the strictest and worst sense of the words, the comer in at the south gate is the way-side hearer, who has his natural affections and passions stirred up; in whom light, joy, gifts, and zeal spring up; and who, in time of temptation and persecution, falls away and goes out of the church, and into the world, and then out of the world under the wrath and curse of God. And this character is further described by this prophet in the 16th

verse of the same chapter; and Christ in his days quotes the words, and applies them: "Thus saith the Lord God, If the prince give a gift unto any of his sons, the inheritance thereof shall be his sons'; it shall be their possession by inheritance." This inheritance is eternal life; and Christ came that we might have it; and he that hath it, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; for Christ came that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly. "But if he give a gift of his inheritance to one of his servants, then it shall be his to the year of liberty; after it shall return to the prince." (Ezek. xlvi. 17.) Our Saviour's explanation and application of this text is, "Take the talent from him, and give it to him that hath ten talents; for he that hath not, (hath not life, but a spiritual gift,) from him shall be taken away even that which he hath." It is often seen that a servant cuts a most glaring figure in the church of God, until the spirit of love and liberty be poured forth upon some of the elect of God about him; and when he sees this, he sinks in his soul at the sight and at the light, and hates it, as Saul did when he saw that God was with David. Such a one sinks in the esteem of such heaven-born souls as much as Saul did in the eyes of Samuel, when he said, "Honour me now before the elders of my people." Nothing discovers a false profession and a false professor, like the spirit of love and liberty being poured out upon poor broken-hearted sinners about him; and, if it come upon such as have looked up to him as something great, discriminating grace discovers him. At this he is offended, hates the light, flees from it, and fights against it; this withers his joys, blasts his zeal and diligence, and dries up the glee of animal spirits, and natural abilities too; so that his gifts return to the prince, and he gives the talent to others. He that receives this gift is a servant, and he comes in at the south gate. He begins his profession with having his passions moved, and his natural affections stirred up, and he comes in at the south gate; and when the jubilee comes, he either takes offence at it, or else in persecution and temptation falls away, and legal bondage seizes him, and he goes back to the first husband, the law, never being divorced from it: and this is going out of the north gate. And when death cuts such a corrupt tree down, the tree falls towards the north; and where the tree falls there it shall lie. But the name and title of the other is that of a son; and his inheritance shall not be taken from him, nor shall he go out of the church but by death: he came in by the north gate. A spirit of bondage, sooner or later, more or less, does exercise all the elect of God, till love casts their fears out; such come in by the north gate, and shall go out by the south. Death cuts that tree of righteousness down, and it falls toward the south; and in the place where it falls there it shall lie.

I must confess that I rather wonder at your giving up all expectations of sensible visits from God by the way, only from your constructions put upon that dark and ambiguous text. "An enemy hath done this." God will never apply any passage of his word in a sense that shall run counter to the whole current of Scripture. "I am

with you always to the world's end." "I will water them every moment. I will keep them night and day." "Their leaf shall be green; nor shall they cease from yielding fruit." Sure I am that heaven and earth shall pass away before a jot or tittle of his word shall fail. And as sure as temptations, desertions, legal bondage, or belief obscure the good work on thy heart, so sure will God shine upon it, revive it, and bring it forth to light again. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," when it shall be perfected both in body and soul. In this confidence, and in the best bonds, I remain

Yours to serve for his sake,
WILLIAM HUNTINGTON.

THE SINGULAR EXPERIENCE AND GREAT SUFFERINGS OF MRS. AGNES BEAUMONT, WHO WAS BORN AT EDWORTH, IN THE COUNTY OF BEDFORD, WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

(Continued from page 140.)

At length, seeing my father refused to let me in, it was put into my heart to spend that night in prayer. I could indeed have gone to my brother's, who lived about a quarter of a mile off, and where I might have proper accommodations. No, thought I, into the barn I will go, and cry to heaven, that Jesus Christ would not shut me out at the last day, and that I might have some fresh discoveries of his love to my soul. I did so, and though naturally of a timorous temper, and many frightful things presented themselves to my mind, yet one scripture after another gave me encouragement. Such as Matt. vi. 6, "Pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." Also Jer. xxxiii. 3, "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not." And with many such good words was I comforted.

Being thus in the barn, and a very dark night, I was again assaulted by Satan; but having received strength from the Lord and his word. I spake out (as I remember) saying, "Satan, my Father hath thee in a chain; thou canst not hurt me." I then returned to the throne of grace; and indeed it was a blessed night to my soul, a night to be remembered to the end of my life, and I hope I never shall forget it; it was surely a night of prayer, yea, and of praise too, when the Lord was pleased to keep all fear from my heart. Surely he was with me in a wonderful manner! O the heart-ravishing visits he gave me, and that spirit of faith in prayer which he poured out upon me! It froze very hard that night, but I felt no cold, although the dirt was frozen on my shoes in the morning.

Whilst thus most delightfully engaged, that scripture came with mighty power on my mind, (1 Pet. iv. 12:) "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you." This word,

"beloved," made such melody in my heart as is not to be expressed, but the rest of those words occasioned some dread; yet still that first word, "beloved," sounded louder than all the rest, and was much in my mind the whole night afterwards. I saw that I was to meet with both bitter and sweet, when I directed my cries to the Lord to stand by and strengthen me, which he graciously did, with many a blessed promise, before the morning light; and to be the "beloved" of God was my mercy, whatever difficulties I endured; nevertheless, I began once to be a little dejected, being grieved to think that I should lose my father's love; but this led me to the Lord to beg that I might not lose his love too, and that good word was immediately given me, (John xvi. 27:) "The Father himself loveth you." O blessed be God, thought I, then it is enough; do with me what seemeth thee good!

When the morning appeared, I peeped through the cracks of the barn, to watch my father's opening the door. Presently he came out and locked it after him, which I thought looked very dark, apprehending from hence he was resolved I should not go in, but still that word, "beloved," &c., sounded in my heart. He soon came into the barn, and seeing me in my riding dress, made a stand, when I thus addressed him: "A good morning to you, father, I have had a cold night's lodging here, but God has been good to me, else I should have had a worse." He said it was no matter. I prayed him to let me go in, saying, "I hope, father, you are not angry with me," and kept following him about the yard as he went to fodder the cows; notwithstanding this he would not regard me, but the more I entreated him the more his anger rose against me, declaring that I should never enter his house again, unless I would promise not to go into the meeting as long as he lived. I replied, "Father, my soul is of too much worth to do this: can you in my stead answer for me at the great day? if so I will obey you in this demand as I do in all other things;" yet I could not prevail.

At last, some of my brother's men came into the yard, and, seeing my case, at their return, reported that their old master had shut Agnes out of doors. Upon hearing this my brother was greatly concerned, and came to my father, and endeavoured to prevail with him to be reconciled; but he grew more angry with him than with me, and at last would not hear him; on which my brother said, "Go home with me, sister, you will catch your death with cold." But I refused, still hoping to be more successful in a farther application; I therefore continued following my father in the yard, crying and hanging about him, and saying, "Pray let me go in," &c. I have since wondered how I durst be thus bold, my father being of a hasty temper, insomuch that his anger has often made me glad to get out of his sight, though, when his passion was over, few exceeded him in good nature.

At length I began to be faint and cold, it being a very sharp morning. I was also grieved for being the occasion of keeping my father in the cold so long, for he kept walking about the yard, and declared that he would not go into the house while I was there. U

therefore went to my brother's, and obtained some refreshment and warmth; then I retired and poured out my soul to God, who was pleased to continue on me a spirit of grace and of supplication, and forsook me not in this day of great trouble.

About noon I asked my sister to go with me to my father's, which she readily did, and finding him in the house and the door locked, we went to the window. My sister said, "Now, father, I hope your anger is over, and you will let my sister in," intreating him to be reconciled, while I burst out with many tears to see him so angry. I do not think fit to mention all he said, but among other things he protested that he would not give me one penny so long as he lived, nor when he died either, but that he would sooner leave his substance to a stranger than to me, &c. These expressions were cutting, and made my heart sink; thought I, What will become of me? to go to service and work hard is a new thing to me who am very young; what shall I do? yet still I thought I had a good God to go to, and that was then a very seasonable word, (Psalm xxvii. 10:) "When my father and mother forsake me then the Lord will take me up."

Perceiving my sister's strong pleadings were in vain, I desired my father to give me my Bible if he would not please to let me in; which he also refused, saying, "That he was resolved I should not have a penny nor a penny's worth as long as he lived," &c. On this I went home with my sister, bitterly weeping, and withdrew into her chamber, where the Lord gave hopes of a better inheritance. O now I was willing to go to service, and to be stripped of all for Christ! I saw that I had a better portion than that of silver or gold, and was enabled to believe I should never want.

My inclination was to go to my father once more, and since he was so very angry both with my brother and sister, I concluded to go alone. Upon coming to the door I found it partly open, and the key being on the outside, and my father within, I pushed the door gently, and was about to enter, which he perceiving, ran hastily to shut it, and had I not instantly withdrawn, one of my legs had been between the door and the threshold. I would not be so uncivil to my father as to lock him in his own house; however, having this opportunity I took the key, intending when he was gone out to venture in and lie at his mercy. After a while he came and looked behind the house, and seeing me standing in a narrow passage by a pond, laid hold of me saying, "Hussy, give me the key quickly, or else I will throw you into the pond." I immediately resigned it with silence and sadness.

It appeared vain to contend; I went down the closes to a wood side, with sighs and groans, and a heart full of sorrow, when this scripture came again into my mind, (Jer. xxxiii. 3:) "Call upon me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not." The night was dark, but I kept in the wood, where I poured out my soul to God with many tears. And that word also greatly comforted me, (Psalm xxxiv. 15:) "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry." I believed his ears were open to a poor disconsolate creature, such as myself, and

that his heart was towards me. And that was a wonderful word at this time, (Isa. lxiii. 9 :) "In all their affliction he was afflicted."

I stayed in this place so long as gave great concern to my brother and sister, who had sent one of their men to know whether my father had let me in; and understanding he had not, they went about seeking me, but they could not find me. At length, having spread my case before the Lord, I returned to my brother's, fully determined not to yield to my father's request, if I begged my bread about the streets. I was so strongly fixed in the resolution, that I thought nothing could move me; yet, alas! like Peter, I was a poor weak creature, as will presently be seen.

This was Saturday night. The next morning I said to my brother, Let us call on my father as we go to the meeting; but upon his telling me this would but further provoke him, we forbore. As we went along he said, "Sister, you are now brought forward to act for Christ. I pray God help you to bear your testimony for him; I would by no means have you consent to my father's terms." "No, brother," I replied, "I would sooner beg my bread from door to door." While I sat at meeting my mind was hurried, as was no wonder considering my case; but service being ended, I again made the proposal to call on my father in our way home. We did so, and found him in the yard. Before we came quite to him, my brother repeated his admonition to me, though I thought I stood in no need of his counsel on this particular. He talked very mildly to my father, pleading with him to be reconciled; but perceiving he still retained his anger, I whispered and desired my brother to go home. "No," said he, "not without you." I said, "I will come presently;" on which he went, though (as he told me afterwards) with many fears lest I should comply; but I then thought I could as soon part with my life.

My brother being gone, I stood pleading with my father, and said, "Father, I will serve you in anything that lies in my power; I only desire liberty to hear God's word on his own day; grant me this, and I ask no more. Father," continued I, "you cannot answer for my sins, or stand in my stead before God; I must look to the salvation of my own soul, &c." He replied, "If I would promise never to go to a meeting as long as he lived, I should then go into the house, and he would provide for me as his own child; if not, I should never have one farthing from him." "Father," said I, "my soul is of more worth; so I dare not make you such a promise." Upon this, his anger was greatly enkindled, and he bade me begone, for he was resolved what to do; "therefore promise me that you will never go to the meeting again, and I will give you the key," repeating these words several times, holding it out to me, and urging me to promise, and I as often refusing, till at last his wrath increased. "What do you say? if you now refuse to comply, you shall never be offered it more, and I am determined you shall never come within my doors again as long as I live." While I thus stood crying by him, he repeated the same expressions. "What do you say, hussy? will you promise or not?" Being thus urged, at last I answered, "Well, father, I will promise you I will never go to a meeting again as long as you live

without your consent." Hereupon he gave me the key, and I went into the house.

But O! soon after I had entered the door, that awful scripture was brought to my mind, Matt. x. 33: "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my father which is in heaven." Also verse 37: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." O! thought I, what will become of me! what have I done this night! I was so filled with terror that I was going to run out of the house again, but I thought this would not alter what I had done. Now, alas! all my comforts were gone, and in their room nothing but grief and rendings of conscience. In this instance I saw what all my resolutions were come to, even nothing. This was the Lord's day night, and a black night it was to me.

In a little time my father came in and behaved with affection; he bade me get him some supper, which I did. He also told me to come and eat with him, but it was a bitter supper to me. My brother's heart ached when he saw I did not follow him, fearing I should promise, and I not coming to his house, he was ready to conclude I had done so. But no tongue can express what a doleful condition I was in. I hardly durst look up to God for mercy. Now I thought I must hear the word no more. What good would it do me if my father could give me his house full of silver and gold! Thus I went about reflecting on my condition, and sorrowing till almost spent with grief.

On Monday I withdrew into the barn, to pray and give vent to my sorrow; when, as I stood sighing, with my hands clinging to the wall, and crying out, "Lord, what shall I do?" those words surprised me, 1 Cor. x. 13, "There shall be a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it." Lord, thought I, what way wilt thou make for my escape? Wilt thou make my father willing to let me go to thy ordinances? If thou do, still, what a wretch was I thus to deny Christ! In the evening, as we were sitting by the fire, my father asked me what was the matter? I burst into tears, saying, "O father, I am distressed at the thoughts of my promise, not to go to a meeting again without your consent." He was so moved that he wept like a child, bidding me not to let that trouble me, for we should not disagree; at which I was a little comforted, and said, "Pray, father, forgive me wherein I have been undutiful to you." He then told me with tears, how much he was troubled for me that night he shut me out of doors, insomuch that he could not sleep, adding, it was my riding behind John Bunyan that made him so angry.*

(To be concluded in our next.)

* Some evil-minded men of the town (as hinted before) especially Mr. F., had set her father against Mr. Bunyan; for in time past he had heard him preach, and had been melted under the word; he would pray, and frequently go to the meeting. Yea, and when his daughter was first under spiritual concern, he had very great awakenings himself, and would say to some of the neighbours, "My daughter can scarce eat, drink, or sleep, and I have lived these threescore years, and have scarce ever thought of my soul," &c.

HE SATISFIETH THE LONGING SOUL, AND FILLETH
THE HUNGRY SOUL WITH GOODNESS.

Dear Friend,—One whom I view and esteem as a father in Israel, who has travelled many years, stood many storms, experienced many oppositions, painful conflicts, within and without, and dreadful enemies, the worst of all which is hateful self; and yet, notwithstanding all, you stand. And I have no doubt you know the cause of your standing, and to whom to ascribe the praise; and that you can say, "Not unto us, O Lord, but unto thee be glory" for the free mercy bestowed upon you.

Now, this is a brief description of my views of you. But as such a one I address you, not that I have a thought of teaching you, for you have been well taught for many years. But I would hope my motive in writing is from a heartfelt union with you. It is said, "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another;" but all have not the opportunity of speaking to each other; some have only the privilege of writing.

This is the Sabbath day, and in some measure I feel a sweetness on my spirit. I know well from whom every good and perfect gift comes. I felt this morning a sincerity of spirit, something of holy reverence, a sober, solemn mind, a deep sense of being a great debtor to my God, and of my great obligations to him from whom all blessings flow. I felt that it was God alone that had made me to differ, for I well know that but for him I should have been in the broad road to destruction, as all my fellow-creatures are, that are yet in nature's darkness. This I can say, it was God of his goodness who quickened my dead soul, put a spark of life therein, and made me feel something of my state. He awakened me to feel as well as see, and tremendous it was to see and feel. O! it made such inroads into my poor heart that everything gave way and fell; the fears I felt seemed as though they would overwhelm me, and swallow me up. O the tremblings within! My poor heart was as though it would burst with fear and grief. I felt exposed, and left bare to the holy displeasure and indignation of a just God, without hope or protection; and, for all I knew, I must go to that hideous place which was open to my view. O! it drank up my spirit, so that there seemed scarcely a pulse left. I seemed in a much worse state than the poor man that fell among thieves. He was wounded, stripped, and left half-dead, but poor I was little short of being wholly dead. How did I wish I had never been born! I looked at my parents with indignation, and I felt I could have crushed them to pieces, because through them I was brought into this miserable world, and I fully thought I should be miserable in the vast ages of eternity.

Now, this is being awakened indeed, and these arrows stuck fast in me; as much so as the arrows in David. O how I did labour to stifle those convictions and to get rid of them! I should have said that I got no relief or deliverance at the time, only the sight in a great measure withheld and the weight lightened. If it had not been so, poor I would soon have been no more. But I never fully lost

them altogether, though for years I wished to shake them off, because they spoiled all my pleasure. Those thoughts of eternity followed me wherever I might, or however I might wish to enjoy such things as others enjoyed. But this was not to be, because better things were intended for me, though I knew it not.

The first part of what is called the good work has not much comfort with it, and yet it is called the good work; for it is said, "God is righteous in all his ways and holy in all his works." Well, then, it must be good to convince a soul of its state, because it does not stop here, if it is of God; for where he begins the good work, he carries it on until the day of Jesus Christ. Now, whom God quickens he keeps alive, as David says, "He hath holden my soul in life, and hath not suffered my feet to be moved." What a mercy! How safe are all God's family, because he has passed his word, and in his word there is power! If every thing besides fails or passes away, "his word abideth for ever." And there is not only power, but a will: "And this is the will of him that sent me," saith the Saviour, "that every one that seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

I well remember years ago, my eyes caught sight of the first clause of this verse: "And this is the will of him that sent me." O what passed in my mind in a second or two! O! I thought, here is the will of God for a poor creature like me to have a knowledge of. What earnestness! What desires! My whole heart and soul with sweetness was moved with the utmost concern to know what the will of God was concerning poor me! And a precious will it was towards me, and towards every one that seeth the Son and believeth on him. I had been favoured both to see him and believe on him, and that assured me everlasting life was mine, and that he would raise me up at the last day. O what sweet, precious seasons, supporting seasons, encouraging seasons, reviving seasons I have had, and that from his precious word! It has been both food and comfort to my soul.

What a peculiar mind the living soul has! If we could distinctly watch the motions of the soul, its wants, desires, longings, and pantings, what savoury, wholesome, sound food it wants! It does not take things for granted, or because others say so; nor does it leave them with a peradventure. It must realize the favours it needs, or remain in a waiting position. It has a jealous eye, a listening ear, particularly in conversation. It has charity, but it is not universal; it can only unite with the living, and not with the dead. It ponders the paths of its feet, looks well to its way, proves things as it passes on, and wants to hold fast that only which is good. God's word it ventures on, and takes it as its compass to steer by: "Thou art my portion," saith this soul, "and in thee only can I hope through a precious Saviour." The only safety and friend that a soul has is a triune God: "The Lord is on my side, I will not fear what man can do unto me." So is the soul on the Lord's side; it would live worthily of him. It desires to obey and serve him, and to cleave to him with purpose of heart. It cannot bear to hear the name of God taken in vain. It never would dishonour him in any way, or rob

him of a particle of the praise that is due to him; but would most freely give him the glory due to his name. It would "be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication make its requests known to God." It would acknowledge him in all his ways. And the soul is here stretched out indeed, begging, saying, "O Lord, direct my every step; teach me, guide me, lead me, and instruct me. Pour out thy Spirit and grace abundantly, that it may operate within me, and that I may feel the holy and powerful influences of thy Spirit giving motion to all the graces that every regenerated soul has; and that there may be a bringing forth of fruit, to show that thou art upright." The chief delight of the soul, and its sweetest, choicest employ is, in singing, adoring, admiring, extolling, and praising the great Three-One for doing such great things for him.

Now, this soul has more peculiarities. It possesses uprightness. It cannot allow or receive anything but what is right. It detests, hates, and abhors deceit and falsehood. It takes no advantage, but can say, with the apostle, "Herein do I exercise myself with a conscience void of offence toward God and man." Its motto is to do as it would be done unto. It would scorn to take the smallest value that belongs to others: honesty is its darling point. It hates envy and strife; it hates evil speaking; it hates contention. In a word, it hates every forbidden thing, and loves all that God commands, and begs that he would work in it all the good pleasure of his will, and carry on the work of faith with power. This soul can have nothing to do with flatteries. It neither gives flattery nor receives it. Frothy shadows and empty forms it will deny and turn away from. It wants what the Lord has promised. He has said, "He will cause them that love him to inherit substance." The soul wants a sure foundation, a quiet resting-place. It wants a certain and firm dependence, something that it can rely on and trust in without fear.

How many years I passed with a tossed mind and tottering hope; a poor, feeble, and often shaken confidence! I can make no better comparison than that of a person crossing a lake on a bridge, and yet afraid that the bridge will give way. What an unsettled state to be in! This was my lot for years—yes, many years; long enough to prize, value, and esteem a good hope, an unshaken confidence, a full assurance that God has a favour towards me, and that he will not forsake the work of his hands, and that he will perfect that which concerns me. What an untold favour! Blessed be the Lord, I am fully favoured to enjoy what I longed for many years, though I had thousands of fears I never should; many desponding, despairing sensations that I never should obtain such solid happiness and peace as I have been favoured with; but God abides faithful, though we believe not, and fulfils what he promised, that "he will satisfy the longing soul, and fill the hungry soul with goodness." What great words! How much they contain! I mean *satisfy* and *fill*. They are so expressive that nothing more can be wanted. God in his own time grants it to all his family.

Some would say, Were I favoured as you speak of, I think I should sit down at ease. Well, thoughts are thoughts, and never establish

anything. I can say I never had a greater sense of my need of God in all things than at this present time. God does not bestow such favours on his people for them to get independent of him. No, no; I can say, "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe; lead me and I shall go right;" "Teach me, then I shall know;" "Keep me, and I shall be kept; suffer not sin to have any dominion over me, but may thy grace be daily sufficient for me."

Now unto Him that is able to keep us from falling; may the peace of Him keep our hearts and minds whilst here below, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen and amen.

JAMES P—.

THE LORD IS THERE.

EZEKIEL xlvi. 35.

SOMETIMES I seem to be alone,
 And nothing can my spirit cheer;
 But though I heave the painful groan,
 I hope in truth "the Lord is there."
 I call to mind the pains I felt
 When on the borders of despair;
 Then did I feel the chains of guilt;
 But yet I hope "the Lord was there."
 Though floods of sorrow on me fell,
 Yet still I was his constant care;
 Nor could my spirit sink to hell,
 Because the Lord himself was there.
 He spoke, the darkness from me fled;
 He did my fainting spirit cheer;
 My soul did feed on living bread;
 And why? because "the Lord was there."
 Since then my path has been upheld;
 Yet still his sacred name I fear,
 And bow to his great sovereign will.
 This makes me know "the Lord is there."
 And why is sin a grief to me?
 Why do I from its ways depart?
 Why do I pant for grace that's free?
 Because the Lord is in my heart.

Great Wakering, Essex.

W. W.

Nothing so captivates the soul of a believer as the power of Jesus conveyed to the heart by the word of his grace; and as the words of Jesus conveyed life to his disciples, who were his companions in the days of his ministry, and bound their hearts fast to him, so does the same power from Jesus, through the word of the gospel, convey fresh life to his disciples now. The life they live in the flesh is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved them, and gave himself for them. The backslidings of *some* of the saints, the awful falls of old professors, the abounding errors and *vile practices* of many under the garb of religion, and, above all, the corruptions and infirmities which he daily discovers in himself, constrain him to say with the disciple, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life?"
 — *H. Fowler.*

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 a 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. 10.

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VOL. XVI.

THE SINGULAR EXPERIENCE AND GREAT SUFFERINGS OF MRS. AGNES BEAUMONT, WHO WAS BORN AT EDWORTH, IN THE COUNTY OF BEDFORD, WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

(Concluded from page 176.)

The greatest part of the next day, being Tuesday, I spent in prayer and weeping, with bitter lamentations, humbling myself before the Lord for what I had done, and begging I might be kept by his grace and Spirit from denying him and his ways for the future. Before night he brought me out of this horrible pit, and set my feet upon a rock, enabling me to believe the forgiveness of all my sins, by sealing many precious promises home on my soul. I could now look back with comfort on the night I spent in the barn. The sweet relish of that blessed word "beloved" returned, and I believed that Jesus Christ was the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and that scripture was much in my mind, Job. v. 19: "He shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." Also Deut. xxxiii. 27: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

My father was as usual this day, and ate his dinner as heartily as ever I knew him: after supper he smoked a pipe, and went to bed seemingly in perfect health. But while I was by his bed-side, laying his clothes on him, those words ran through my mind. Amos. viii. 2: "The end is come." I could not think what to make of these words, they seemed so very mysterious to me.

As soon therefore as I quitted the room, I went to the throne of

grace, where my heart was wonderfully drawn forth, especially that the Lord would show mercy to my father and save his soul, for which I was so importunate, that I could not tell how to leave off pleading: and still that word continued on my mind, "The end is come." Another thing I entreated of the Lord was, that he would stand by me and be with me in whatever trouble I had to meet with, little thinking what was coming upon me that night and the week following.

After this I went to bed, thinking of the freedom which God had given me in prayer; but had not slept long before I heard a mournful noise, which at first I apprehended had been in the yard, but soon perceived it to be my father, I immediately arose, put on a few clothes, ran and lighted a candle, and coming to him, found him sitting upright in his bed, crying to the Lord for mercy, saying, "Lord, have mercy on me, for I am a miserable sinner! Lord Jesus, wash me in thy precious blood, &c." I stood trembling to hear him in such distress and to see him look so pale, and inquired how long he had been ill? He said, "I was struck with a pain at my heart in my sleep, and shall die presently." I then knelt down by the bed-side, and, which I had never done before, prayed with him, in which he seemed to join very earnestly.

This done, I said, "Father, I will go and call somebody, for I dare not stay with you alone." He replied, "You shall not go out at this time of night, do not be afraid;" still crying aloud for mercy. Soon after he said he would rise and put on his clothes himself. I ran and made a good fire, and got him something hot, hoping that it might relieve him. "O," said he, "I want mercy for my soul! Lord, show mercy to me, for I am a great sinner! If thou dost not show me mercy, I am miserable for ever!" "Father," said I, "there is mercy in Christ Jesus for sinners; the Lord help you to lay hold on it." "O," replied he, "I have been against you for seeking after Jesus Christ; the Lord forgive me, and lay not this sin to my charge!"

I desired him to drink something warm which I had for him, but his trying to drink brought on a violent reaching, and he became black in the face. I stood by holding his head, and he leaned upon me with all his weight. Dreadful time indeed! If I left him, I was afraid he would fall into the fire; and if I stood by him, he would die in my arms, and no one person near us. What shall I do? Lord help me. Then came that scripture, Isa. xli. 10: "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, I am thy God; I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee," &c.

By this time my father revived again out of his fit of fainting, for I think he did swoon away; he repeated his cries as before, "Lord, have mercy upon me, for I am a sinful man! Lord, spare me one week more! one day more!" Piercing words to me! After he had sat a while, he felt an uneasiness in his bowels, and called for a candle to go into the other room. I saw him stagger as he went over the threshold, soon followed him, and found him on the floor, which occasioned me to scream out, "Father! father!" putting my hands

under his arms, lifting with all my might, first by one arm, then by another, crying and striving till my strength was quite spent.*

I found all my attempts to raise him in vain, and therefore, though not without fear of rogues, who I thought waited at the door, ran like a distracted creature, through deep snow, to my brother's, where I stood crying in a deplorable manner. The family being alarmed, my brother came immediately, with two of his men, and found our father risen from the ground, and laid upon the bed. My brother spoke to him, but he could not answer, except one word or two. On my return, they desired me not to go into the room, saying he was just departing. O dismal night! had not the Lord wonderfully supported me, I must have died too of the fears and frights which I met with.

My brother's man soon came out, and said he was departed. Melancholy tidings! but in the midst of my trouble I had a secret hope that he was gone to heaven; nevertheless, I sat crying bitterly, to think what a sudden and surprising change death had made on my father, who went to bed well, and was in eternity by midnight! I said in my heart, "Lord, give me one seal more that I shall go to heaven when death shall make this change on me." Then that word came directly, Isa. xxxv. 10: "The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads," &c. O, I longed to be in heaven; thought I, They are singing, whilst I am sorrowing. "O that I had the wings of a dove! then would I fly away and be at rest."

Quickly after my brother called in some neighbours, among whom came Mr. F.,† my bitter enemy, who inquired if my father was dead. Somebody replied, "Yes, he is." He then said, "It is no more than what I looked for;" though no notice was taken of these words till afterwards. This was Tuesday after the Friday night that I lay in the barn, when that scripture was so frequently in my mind: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you." I thought now I had met with fiery trials indeed, not knowing that I had as bad or worse to come, which I shall now proceed to relate.

The day that my father died, the clergyman who met Mr. Bunyan and me at Gamlingay town's-end, reported at Baldock fair, that we had been criminally conversant together; which vile report I heard the next day, but that scripture came with much sweetness and bore me up, Matt. v. 11: "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake."

On Thursday we had agreed to bury my father, and accordingly invited our relations and friends to the funeral. But on Wednesday night, Mr. F. sent for my brother and asked him, "Whether he thought my father died a natural death?" A question which amazed

* See the remarkable dream of the apple-tree.

† This man's name was Farry, a lawyer, who at one time, hoping to obtain Agnes for a wife, had persuaded her father to settle all his property upon her. But when Agnes refused his offer, it turned him into her bitterest enemy.

my brother, who readily answered in the affirmative, "Yes, I know he died a natural death." Mr. F. replied, "But I believe he did not, and I have had my horse out of the stable twice to-day to fetch a surgeon, but considered that you are an officer of the parish, therefore leave it to you; pray see and do your office." Upon my brother's asking him how he thought my father came to his end if he did not die a natural death? He answered, "I believe your sister has poisoned him."

My brother returned with a heavy heart, not knowing but I might lose my life; on acquainting my sister, she was likewise distressed, when they sent for a godly neighbour to pray with and counsel them, who advised them to keep it from me that night; but early in the morning my brother came and told me, to whom I immediately said, "O brother, blessed be God for a clear conscience!" We deferred the funeral, and sending for a surgeon, told him the case, who examined me how my father was before he went to bed, and what supper he ate, &c. I told him all the particulars; and when he surveyed the corpse, he went to Mr. F. and told him he wondered how he could entertain such thoughts concerning me, assuring him there were no just grounds for his suspicion. Mr. F. replied, he verily believed it was so. The surgeon perceiving that no arguments would convince him, told us we must have a coroner and jury. I readily agreed to this proposal, saying, "Moreover, sir, as my innocence is known to God, I would have it known to men, therefore pray be pleased to open my father." This he declined, saying there was no need for it, but promised to meet the coroner and jury the next day.

Now I had new work cut out, therefore went to the Lord and prayed that he would appear in this fiery trial. I saw my life at stake, as well as the name of God struck at; but that word was sent for my support and comfort, and it was a blessed one to my soul, Isa. liv. 17: "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." Also, chap. xlv. 24: "All that are incensed against thee shall be ashamed." Encouraged by these precious promises, we sent for the coroner the next morning. Mr. F., hearing of it, told my brother he would have him meet the coroner and jury and settle it; "for," continued he, "it will be found petit-treason, and your sister must be burnt." "No, sir," replied my brother, "we are not ashamed to let them go through with it." Upon hearing this I said, "I will have them go through with it if it cost me all my father has left me." I did not know how far God might suffer this man and the devil to go. It also troubled me to think that in case I suffered, another, as innocent as myself, must suffer too, for Mr. F. reported that I had poisoned my father, and Mr. Bunyan gave me the stuff to do it with; but the Lord knew our innocency in this affair, both in thought, word, and deed.

Whilst thus surrounded with straits and troubles, I must own that at times I had many carnal reasonings, though I knew myself clear. I thought, Should God suffer my enemy to prevail to the taking away of my life, how shall I endure burning? O! the thoughts

of burning were very terrible, and made my very heart to ache within me; but that scripture which I had often thought of before my father's death, came now into my mind, Isa. xlii. 2: "When thou passest through the fire, I will be with thee," &c. I said in my heart, Lord, thou knowest my innocence, therefore if thou art pleased to suffer my enemies to take away my life, yet surely thou wilt be with me; thou hast been with me in all my trials hitherto, and I trust wilt not now leave me in the greatest of all. At last I was made to believe that, if I did burn at a stake, the Lord would give me his presence, and, in a solemn manner, I resigned myself to his disposal, either for life or death.

That forenoon in which the coroner was expected, some Christian friends from Gamlingay paid me a visit, and spent some time in prayer, and pleaded earnestly with the Lord on my behalf, that he would graciously appear for me, and glorify his name in my deliverance. This done, I retired, and was much enlarged in begging the divine presence this day, and that I might not have so much as a dejected countenance, or be in the least daunted before them. I thought to stand before a company of men for the murder of my own father, though I knew my innocence, would make me sink, unless I had much of the Lord's presence to support me. I thought, Should I appear dejected or daunted, people will conclude that I am guilty; therefore I begged of God that he would carry me above the fears of men, devils, and death, and give me faith and courage to lift up my head before my accusers. Immediately that scripture darted into my mind, Job xvii. 9: "The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger." Then I broke out, "Lord, thou knowest my heart and my hands are clean in this matter." This was such a suitable word that I could hardly have had such another, and the Lord made every tittle of it good before the sun went down, so that I was helped to look mine enemies in the face with boldness.

Presently word was brought that the coroner and jury were come. I sat with some neighbours by the fire as they passed through the house into the room where my father lay; some of the jurymen came, and taking me by the hand, with tears running down their cheeks, said, "Pray God be thy comfort, thou art as innocent as I am, I believe." Thus one and another spake to me, which I looked upon as a wonderful mercy to find they believed me not guilty.

When the coroner had viewed the corpse he came to warm himself by the fire where I sat, and looking steadfastly at me, he said, "Are you the daughter of the deceased?" I answered, "Yes." He replied, "Are you the person who was in the house alone with him when he was stricken with death?" "Yes, sir, I am she." He then shook his head, at which I feared his thoughts were evil towards me.

The jury also having taken their view, they went to dine at my brother's; after which they proceeded to business, and sent for me. As I was going my heart went out much to the Lord that he would stand by me. Then came these words, Isa. liv. 4: "Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed." And before I came to my brother's

house, my soul was made like the chariots of Ammi-nadib, being wonderfully supported, even above what I could ask or think.

When I got there, my brother sent for Mr. F., who not coming soon, he sent again; at last he came. Then the coroner called the witnesses, being my brother's men, who were sworn. He asked them whether they were present when my father died? what words they heard him speak? &c. And when they had answered, he called Mr. F. and gave him his oath: "Come," said he, "as you are the occasion of our meeting together, we would know about this young woman murdering her father, and on what grounds you accuse her." Mr. F., but in a confused manner, told the coroner of the late difference between my father and me; how I was shut out of doors, and that my father died but two nights after I was admitted. Nobody knew what to make of this strange preamble; but I stood in the parlour amongst them with my heart as full of comfort as it could hold, being got above the fear of men and devils.

The coroner said, "This is nothing to the matter in hand; what have you to accuse this young woman with?" To which Mr. F. replied little or nothing to the purpose; and at the same time returning cross answers, was bid to stand by. Then I was called. "Come, sweetheart," said the coroner, "tell us, where were you that night your father shut you out?" I answered, "Sir, I was in the barn all night." "And were you there alone?" "Yes, sir; I had nobody with me." He shook his head and proceeded: "Where did you go to the next morning?" "Sir, I stayed in the yard till nine or ten o'clock, entreating my father to let me come in, but he would not." At this he seemed concerned, and asked "where I was the remainder part of the day?" I said, "At my brother's, and lay there the following night." "When did your father let you come in?" "On the Lord's day evening." "Was he well when you came in?" "Yes, sir." "How long did he live afterwards?" "Till Tuesday night, sir." "Was he well that day?" "Yes, sir, as well as ever I saw him in my life, and he ate as hearty a dinner." "In what manner was he taken, and at what time?" "Near midnight, complaining of a pain at his heart. I heard him groan, and made all haste to light a candle; and when I came, I found him sitting up in his bed, and crying out of a pain in his heart; and he said he should presently die, which frightened me much, so that I could scarcely get on my clothes, when I made a fire, and sat by it. I got him something warm, of which he drank a little, but straining to vomit, he swooned away while I held his head, and could not leave him to call in assistance, fearing lest in my absence he should fall into the fire."

The coroner further proceeded: "Was there nobody in the house with you?" "No sir," I said, "I had none with me but God. At length my father came a little to himself again, and went into the other room, whither I soon followed him, and found him lying upon the floor; at which sight I screamed out in a most dismal manner, yet I tried to raise him up, but in vain; till at last, being almost spent, I ran to my brother's in a frightful condition."

Having given him this relation, the coroner said, "Sweetheart,

I have no more to say to you;" and then addressed himself to the jury, whose verdict being given, he turned himself to Mr. F. and said, "You, sir, who have defamed this young woman in this public manner, endeavouring to take away her good name, yea, her life also, if you could, ought to make it your business now to establish her reputation. She has met with enough in being alone with her father when seized with death, you had no need to add to her affliction and sorrow, and if you were to give her five hundred pounds it would not make her amends."

He then came to me, and, taking me by the hand, said, "Sweet-heart, do not be daunted, God will take care of thy preferment, and provide thee a husband, notwithstanding the malice of this man. I confess these are hard things for one so young as thou art to meet with, but thank God for this deliverance, and never fear but he will take care of thee." Then addressing myself to the coroner and jury, I said, "Sirs, if you are not all satisfied, I am free my father should be opened; as my innocence is known to God, I would have it known to you also, for I am not afraid of life." "No," replied the coroner, "we are satisfied, there is no need of having him opened, but bless God that the malice of this man broke out before thy father was buried."

The room was full of people, and great observation was made of my looks and behaviour. Some gentlemen who were on the jury, as I was afterwards told, said that they should never forget with what cheerful countenance I stood before them. I know not how I looked, but this I know, my heart was as full of peace and comfort as it could hold. The jurymen were all much concerned for me, and were observed to weep when the coroner examined me. Indeed, I have abundant cause to bless God that they were deeply convinced of my innocence; and I have heard that some of them were so affected with my case, that they would long after speak of me with tears.

When the coroner and company were gone, we sent again to our friends to invite them to the funeral, which was on Saturday night. I now thought my trials on this account were over, and that Mr. F. had vented all his malice, but was mistaken; for, seeing he could not take away my life, his next attempt was to deprive me of that substance my father had left me. Accordingly he sends for my brother-in-law from my father's grave, and informed him how things were left in the will, telling him that his wife was cut off with a shilling, but he could put him in a way to come in for a share.*

This was a new trouble. My brother-in-law † threatened, if I would

* Mr. F. was an attorney, and made the will about three years before her father's death, at which time he put her father forward to give her more than her sister, because of a design he then had of marrying her: but upon her going to the meetings and becoming religious, he turned to be her bitter enemy, was filled with implacable malice and hatred, and did all in his power to prejudice the mind of her father against her.

† The reader is desired to take notice that this was not her own brother who attended the meeting, and sympathized with her under her suffering, as before related, but her sister's husband.

not resign part of what my father had left, he would begin a suit at law. Mr. F. prompted him on, saying, "Do not let her go away with so much more than your wife," &c. And to law we were going, to prevent which, and for the sake of peace, I satisfied my brother with a handsome present.

About a month after my father was buried, another report was spread at Biggleswade, that now Agnes Beaumont had confessed she poisoned her father, and was quite distracted. "Is it true?" said some. "Yes, it is true," said others. "I have heard the defaming of many; Report, say they, and we will report it." (Jer. xx. 10.)

But I was determined, if it pleased God to spare me till next market-day, I would go and let them see I was not distracted, and accordingly went; and when the market was at the height, showed myself among the people, which put a stop to their business for a time, for their eyes were upon me; while I walked through and through with this thought, If there were a thousand more of you I would lift up my head before you all. That day I was well in my soul, and therefore exceedingly cheerful. Many people came and spake to me, saying, "We now see that you are not distracted."

Some I saw cry, but some others laughed. O, thought I, mock on, there is a day coming that will clear up all. That was a wonderful scripture, Psalm xxxvii. 6: "And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday."

After this another report was raised in a different part of the country, that Mr. Bunyan was a widower, and gave me counsel to poison my father, that he might marry me; which plot was agreed on, they said, as we went to Gamlingay. But this report rather occasioned mirth than mourning, because Mr. Bunyan at the same time had a good wife living.

Now, thought I, surely Mr. F. has done with me; but the next summer a fire broke out in the town; how it came to pass no one could tell, but Mr. F. soon found a person on whom to charge it, for he affirmed that it was I who set the house on fire; but, as the Lord knoweth, I knew nothing of this fire till the doleful cry reached my ears. This malicious slander was not much regarded.

Thus have I related both the good and evil things I have met with in past dispensations of Providence, and I have reason to wish it was as well with my soul now as then. And one mercy the Lord added to all the rest, which I cannot but mention, namely, that he kept me from prejudice against Mr. F.; for notwithstanding he had so greatly injured me, I was helped to cry to the Lord, and that with many tears, for mercy on his soul. I can truly say that I earnestly longed after his salvation, and begged of God to forgive him, whatever he had said or done to my hurt.

AGNES BEAUMONT.

N.B. Mrs. Beaumont survived these trials many years, and was twice married; her last husband's name was Story, a person of considerable substance and great seriousness. She died at Highgate, November 28th, 1720, aged 68 years. Her remains, by her order,

were brought to Hitchin, where they lie interred in the Baptist burying ground, and her funeral discourse was preached by Mr. Needham; from 2 Cor. iv. 17: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

SORROW AND COMFORT; OR, CONFLICTS AND TRIUMPHS THE COMMON LOT OF ALL REAL BELIEVERS.

BY JOHN RUSK.

"The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy."—PROV. xiv. 10.

(Continued from page 155.)

5. Another cause of real joy is, *every time that Christ visits our souls*. You must know that, however highly favoured you and I may be, we shall not always have his comfortable presence. O no; none of God's family ever had. He goes and comes as it pleaseth him; and a soul that has felt much of this is like a fool to every thing else when he withdraws, and will continue so all the time that tenderness lasts. And how such would like to die and be taken home! for they look back and well remember the wretched plight they were formerly in, and they fear lest they should go back into the old way.

Several things are felt when we have the Lord's presence, which cause this joy; and when he hides his face we do not feel them.

First, *Peace*. You know when he visited his disciples he said, "Peace be unto you." Now, this we do feel, a sweet peace; and such can well rejoice, because it proves that they are in covenant with God, and he says that "the covenant of his peace shall never be removed."

Secondly, They enjoy *life*. The living water which he gives them springs up, and this arises from his visiting them: "In the light of the King's countenance is life." Such therefore are spiritually minded, for that is life and peace.

Thirdly, They feel *rest* in their souls: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Now his presence brings this: "My presence shall go with thee." But how shall I know it? Why, "I will give thee rest."

Fourthly, In his presence it is that we feel all that *salvation* which I have treated of. Now, to be saved is a blessed thing, and this once done is done for ever; but to enjoy it, *that* is a very heaven upon earth. How shall we get at this enjoyment? why, by fervent prayer, as you read: "Turn us again, O Lord of hosts, and cause thy face to shine upon us, and we shall be saved."

Fifthly, It is very precious to feel that we are *safe*, that we are preserved. How different was David when he said, "I shall one day fall by the hand of Saul!" I say, how painful to be walking in jeopardy every hour! O what painful weeks and months have I had to be sure! Now, all the time Christ visits us we feel that we are safe. Hence Job says that "his visitations preserved his spirit."

Lastly, *Death and all its consequences*, in the feeling of it, are kept out by his presence. Hence David says, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, (but why not not, David?) for thou art with me."

Now, our blessed Lord made the following sweet promise to his disciples, and to us also, just before his departure: "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." That is, they never can finally take it away; for you and I well know that they often for a time rob us of all our comfort and joy.

6. This joy sometimes comes on, and very greatly increases, *while we are conversing with the saints*, and telling them what the Lord has done for our souls. I have often found this to be delightful work, and a work that Satan is desperately against. He will labour hard to get us to talk against others, or about this minister or that, or about politics—it matters not what, so that we keep from telling of God's goodness to us in providence and in grace, of the finished work of Christ, and of our trying to exalt the Saviour. O how Satan hates all this, because it is wholly against his infernal interest! But we are told as follows: "Remember that thou magnify his work, which men behold." We may take this in a twofold point of light:

First, the great work that our Lord Jesus came into this world to accomplish, and which he did complete. Hence he told his heavenly Father, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." And O what a work was this, and it was all for us!

Secondly, The good work which God the eternal Spirit operates in our hearts, as you read: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

You and I are dead in sin when God takes us in hand. He therefore quickens our souls and enlightens our understandings, and he regenerates us, which is putting all the graces within us, as living principles; and as he sees fit, he draws them forth into act and exercise. Observe, he does not give us faith at one time, love at another, and repentance at another. O no; but all at once. Say you, I do not see it so. That does not alter it; you will only see it as it is drawn out. Hence grace in the heart is called treasure: "A good man (good in Christ Jesus) out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good." Now, you and I have no command, no power over all this work. No; it entirely depends upon the Holy Spirit, who works in us in a sovereign way, and sometimes quite unexpectedly to us. But say you, Of what use, then, are all the gospel commands and exhortations? I say, They are of very great use, because by them we learn how very short we come, and how dependant we are upon the blessed Spirit; and he enables us to cry mightily to the Lord, who hears our cry, and works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. This stops all boasting; and thus this good work goes on, but with great opposition. The world, the flesh, the devil, and ourselves, all oppose God's work in the heart. I never found greater,

may, not so great opposition as I have found from myself; and of this Paul complains: "I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind." O how I find it while writing this little book! Satan comes and stirs up the corruption of my heart, in order that I may leave off. But we are told to give no place to the devil. "Ah!" says he, "it is sparks of your own kindling, and you will lie down in sorrow; it is only the one talent, and it will be taken away, and then you will go from bad to worse." However, God has promised persevering grace; and that the righteous shall hold on his way.

But we are told, as it respects this good work, to remember that we magnify it. This shows that we, like Israel of old, are apt to forget: "They soon forgot his works." Yet this is a very great encouragement, what our Lord says: "He (that is, the Holy Spirit) shall bring all things to your remembrance, and he shall testify of me." We have the example of Bible saints for this. Hence David says, "Come hither, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul."

I remember one day (it is years ago) being in a sad state, so cast down on account of what I felt within, that I really thought after all I was an Antinomian. Well, I thought of calling on a friend, but had much thought about it, yet I went; and after I sat down, I spoke wretched and miserable things out of my own heart, and went on a good while, showing that it must be life that made us feel all this, and that this was certainly "the law in our members." After some time, the person that was with me said, "I am glad you came, for just before I was almost in despair; but while you have been speaking, I have found a hope rise up. I had been reading Mr. H.'s 'Eternal Setting of the Sun,' and concluded that it had set upon me." Thus, you see, God does approve of this work.

I could mention many things of the same kind. Malachi says, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it; and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name; and they shall be mine in that day when I make up my jewels." (Malachi iii. 16, 17.)

Now, depend upon it that in this way, as I said before, you and I often find this joy increased. If you read the 107th Psalm, you will find the chequered life of a Christian, his ups and downs, ins and outs; and what is all this for? Why, it is for his good and God's glory. Hence David says, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing." (Psalm cvii. 22.)

7. There is such a thing as *feeding upon God's word of promise*; and much joy is often found here. Ah! say some, and I have often wondered; for people have ere now been telling me of their troubles, and I have said, Why don't you read your Bible, and get comfort? and I have told them of promises exactly suitable, and I have been astonished at it. Yes; and the reason of all this wonder and astonishment is, because you yourself never were tried, and give great reason

to think that you are not in the footsteps of the flock. God's family cannot take hold of a promise when they like, although it may be exactly suitable. I have been ere now in the depths of trouble, have really felt my need, and have cried to the Lord again and again, and read promises over in the word exactly suitable, and have gone to hear the word and heard my very case described; yet after all this, I could as soon create a world by speaking, as I could apply one promise to my heart. People that talk otherwise only show how profoundly ignorant they are of God's work and of the power of unbelief, which shuts all out until God comes. Unbelief and carnal reasoning will bar and bolt the heart against every promise. Nevertheless there is such a thing as feeding upon God's word of promise; and it is as Jeremiah says when it is found, and that shows that there is a seeking after it, and perhaps for a long time; as David says, "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? For ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? How long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?" &c. Now, do you suppose that if David could have taken hold of the promise, he would not? Then how very absurd is such talk! Such people had better say nothing at all. Yet after all this seeking the Lord, David found that he did not seek in vain; for he adds, "But I have trusted in thy mercy, my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation. I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me." (Psalm xiii.)

Jeremiah says, "Thy word was found, and I did eat it, and it was to me the joy and the rejoicing of my heart." And how often, fellow traveller, have you and I felt the same! But it is needful in order to our eating the word, to have an appetite for it; and various things bring this about. Sometimes for a whole week every thing shall go bitterly with us, cross upon cross, trial upon trial; so that we are like Job, wearied of our lives. Well, in this state we go to hear the word, very likely concluding it to be of no use; but the Lord comes, and our hearts are filled with joy. We "eat the word." I remember one time going to hear Mr. H. in a very dejected and bowed down state; and as he went on in preaching, I felt the clouds disperse, unbelief died away, and faith increased. The text was, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come," &c. When the service was over I was filled with joy, and could not help going into the vestry to tell him. O how happy I was! Thus "the word was found and I did eat it, and it was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart."

But again. In reading the word, if God is pleased, we shall find it just the same. Or in meditating on the word, our meditation of him is very sweet. It does not matter how it comes to us, so that it does come. David says, "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart." Ah! say some, I have often been very joyful when I could see how I had kept the commandments of God. Yes, and in so doing you have gloried in a thing of nought, in a lie, in yourself, and in what David never gloried in. Why so? say you. Because no child of God ever did keep the moral law; and if he did, if it really was possible through grace for him to keep it, he would

not glory in himself, but "let him that glorieth glory in the Lord." David's joy did not arise from his keeping God's statutes; but because he with the eye of faith saw the Messiah that was to come keeping them in his room and stead: "He shall magnify the law," &c. Therefore David says, "The statutes of the Lord," what he shall do when he becomes incarnate, "they are right." He will perfectly obey them all, and this rejoices my heart. (Psalm xix. 8.) How often do you and I rejoice in the same, namely, that we are "the righteousness of God in him!" Thus "we rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

8. *The testimony of a good conscience* is a cause of much joy. No man is born with a good conscience. We are all "born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and in sin did our mother conceive us." And God teaches us this if we are of his family. And when we are thus taught, how hard do we labour to get a good conscience! But O what a weighty truth this is: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, and the leopard his spots? Then may ye that are accustomed to do evil, learn to do well." Truly it is fruitless labour; and yet it is very necessary that God's children should go on with it, that they may know what a power there is in sin, and their own weakness, so becoming rooted and grounded in God's truth.

Head-notions cannot teach us what a dreadful state and condition we are plunged in by the fall. It is easy to *read*, "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint; from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head we are full of wounds, bruises, and putrifying sores;" but *feelingly to believe* this to be our case is another thing. Yet some are brought to know it. The publican was: "He smote upon his breast." That is, he felt a guilty conscience, and cried for mercy.

Now, I will mention some things that God does for us in order to our having a good conscience.

First, *The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ must be applied to the conscience.* Short of this the conscience never can be good according to God's word. Various schemes and plans have been adopted by the children of men, in order, if possible, to make the conscience good, such as giving to the poor, attending to all the outward ordinances of God's word, visiting the sick, trying to pray much, vowing, resolving, and binding themselves with oaths; but the love and power of sin have mastered all their attempts, till at last the agony that such have felt has driven them to suicide. Ah! reader, it is of the greatest importance that the conscience be made good; but it is done in the following way: God is pleased to quicken the conscience, and then it will never more be bribed. In a natural state many conclude that it is good, being left to be deluded by those dead works which I have mentioned, and never having been undeceived till they opened their eyes in hell. But now the child of God having life, he feels what he really is; and he also is enlightened to see it. And now he is taught the necessity of the atonement or blood of Christ being applied to the conscience; and O how earnestly does he cry to God for this! Now, I believe that this is the way, namely, the Holy Spirit

enables us to believe that God the Father has accepted us in Christ Jesus, he having died for us: "He died for our sins, and put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." This appropriating faith removes guilt from the conscience, and all sin is removed. Hence you read that God purifies the heart by faith. Away, then, go all sins of an openly profane nature, and all sins of a holy appearance in the eyes of men, called dead works; and now we go on quite in a different way from what we did before, not working *for* life, but working *from* life: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God!" And then joy will spring up in the heart, as Paul says, "My rejoicing is this, in the testimony of my conscience." For the blood of Christ has a voice in it, and it speaketh. Hence Paul says, "And to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel."

Secondly, In order to a good conscience we must have *the sense of justification*. What a great thing this is! Not only to remove sin and guilt, but to place the whole of Christ's righteousness to your account, and this to be felt in the conscience! "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." O how this will cause us to rejoice, when the peace of God reigns in the heart! which peace never would have come into the conscience had we not been pardoned and justified. We well know how we were before this took place: "A wounded spirit who can bear?"

Thirdly, *The witness of God's Spirit* felt and enjoyed in the conscience, also, is the cause of much joy; because this tells me that I am a son or daughter of God, adopted into his family; that I am "an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ;" that "he died for my sins, and rose again for my justification;" that I am an object of God's everlasting love, chosen in Christ Jesus; and that he will lead me and guide me all my journey through; that he will be with me to hoary hairs and old age; that my end shall be peace, and that I shall enter everlasting glory above, and sing salvation to God and the Lamb to all eternity.

These are only a few of the numberless things which the Holy Spirit witnesses to our consciences, and enables us to rejoice in with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

What can be greater than these three things: the conscience purged from sin and dead works; for such a one to have all righteousness freely given him, and for his conscience not to accuse, but to acquit him; and for the Holy Ghost to bear witness with his spirit (or conscience) to the truth of all this?

Now, all this is really true. Nevertheless, as we carry about us a body of sin and death, it will not be so easy as we at first think to live up to these things. No, indeed it will not; for we shall be opposed in all directions. Hence Paul, who far exceeded any that have followed him, says, "I labour to keep a good conscience, void of offence toward God and toward man." (Acts xxiv. 16.) You see that it is not a careless, loose profession of truth that will keep the conscience rejoicing.

(To be continued.)

LETTERS FROM A FATHER TO A SON.

II.

Dear Son,—We received with much pleasure your “*memorial*,” in which you say you are “*shut up and cannot come forth*.” I can sympathize with you, and am sorry I am so much like you. O what a prison-house is a body of sin and death to a quickened soul! O how will it make him groan to be delivered! “*Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name*,” said poor David; and I am sure it is the longing desire of every quickened soul. “*In this body we groan, being burdened*.” “*For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary one to the other, so that we cannot do the things that we would*.”

It appears to me the devil is always watching the child of God with an evil design; taking advantage of almost every thing seen, heard, or felt, either to ensnare or wound his soul; trying at the gate of Mansoul to make some hellish inroad or other; keeping the poor town of Mansoul in one continual ferment, so that there is scarcely anything seen or heard tell of but rumours of war and insurrections in it: at least, it is so in the town in which my poor man’s soul dwells.

O the dreadful assaults of the flesh and darts of hell I have suffered since the above was written! They have made every wall in the town of Mansoul shake and tremble to the very foundation; and, through fear, I have almost wished I had never been born. I find I have put the harness on, therefore cannot boast as he that hath put it off. O what an experienced, subtle, wily warrior the devil is! And

“*Seldom do we see the snares,
Before we feel the smart.*”

And O how do these things terrify us! Poor Hart felt this ill enough, I am persuaded, though he says,

“*But let not all this terrify.*”

Ah! Hart, thy meaning was good, but terrified thou wast, and so am I; and terrify us the devil will, by all the hellish means his infernal art and power can devise. And none is so fierce that dare stir him up. Who, then, is able to stand before him? And this infernal prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, is constantly going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it. “*Yes*,” some would be ready to say, “*in America*.” Ah! John, ’tis nearer than that his walking to and fro, up and down, in the town of Mansoul, or in that earth the Scripture speaks of, where it says, “*The first man is of the earth, earthy*.” Yes, John, it is the earthly house of our tabernacle; this dirty, dusty depravity, is this serpent’s meat. Here it is the “*to and fro*” and “*walking up and down*” work is carried on, seeking to devour us by sudden darts; or, under sore crosses and trials, to blow up the enmity of the carnal mind against God, then to turn accuser, and accuse us night and day before the Lord, so that we hardly dare lift our eyes towards heaven or pray for help, so hard does this battle

seem to go against us at times. It appears to me at times as though the very soldiers that are on the Lord's side would faint, and give up the town, and that poor Mansoul would be retaken and destroyed after thirty years' hot war, so sick, and weary, and faint in their minds are all the Lord's soldiers in the town of Mansoul. Therefore I wonder not at the fears, doubts, and misgivings you speak of. Ah! John, "if the foundation be destroyed, what shall the righteous do?" O that you and I may be found to be built upon that Rock against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. This is the prayer of my poor praying, fearing soul: this is all my hope of salvation.

But I must conclude in haste, or it will be too late for post, and then you would not get it till Monday. All our kindest love to you and all relations. Write soon.

I endeavoured to finish this scrawl last night after I came home, therefore you will no doubt find many blunders. I hope you will not be discouraged at my fearing or fainting; for though faint, by the Lord's help I mean to pursue, and, if I can, to keep the

"field, and never yield,
But still to eye the Saviour.
"To trust his gracious promise,
Thus hard press'd with evil;
This, this is faith will conquer death,
And overcome the devil."

Affectionately Yours,

Bath, Oct. 17, 1841.

J. B.

UPON A POOR POLLUTED WORM HE MAKES HIS GLORY SHINE.

My dear Friend,—Yours came to hand, and I am glad to hear from you.

I wish to feel thankful that the dear Lord makes my poor ministry a blessing to your soul; but I really cannot feel thankful for any mercy except the Lord bless me with a grateful heart. In self and of self I am one of the most wretched beings, and often wonder what I am living for. And yet, strange to tell, the Lord now and then shines into my dark mind, and gives me a glimpse of his glory. And when such poor polluted worms are enabled to arise and shine in the glory of the Lord, and appear in his beauty, it is confounding to reason, and fills the soul with wonder and amazement; then indeed we worship, praise, and adore a Three-one God.

But the people of God must not always be in full pay and have large bounties; there are to be mourning times as well as rejoicing times, fears and faintings as well as shouting victory.

I am sorry to say that I cannot write more, for one friend or another keeps calling, owing to the confusion there is about. I do hope we shall be preserved from further outrage, but I really do not know, for they will not let any of the trades work. Do pray for me, and the God of Peace be with you all. Yours in the Lord,

August 19, 1842.

W. GADSBY.

THE LORD KNOWN BY HIS JUDGMENT.

(Continued from page 166.)

I have now shown how the Lord is known by the exercise of faith in the hearts of his children, as well as what faith is; I now come to the next grace I proposed to notice, viz.

Secondly, *Hope*. That which faith believes, hope expects and goes forward in bright anticipation of, faith being "the substance of things hoped for." (Heb. ii. 1.) According as faith gets stronger and stronger, so hope gets brighter and brighter, and the expectation more and more enlivened; but when faith is tried by any of the things that I have mentioned, and gets sluggish and downcast, and unbelief seems to rise up in its place, then hope hides her face behind the bush, nor will she show herself again to any extent till faith gets a little more confidence; she will show her face through *desire*, but will not rise up to any bright anticipation; she will fix her eye on faith, and where faith fixes and operates, there will she expect.

Hope will fix her *expectation* in the same thing that faith takes for her stronghold, viz., the faithfulness of God to all his promises. She expects he will be faithful, and is ever upon the look-out for the accomplishment; hence David, when he found his spirits drooping, spurred on his hope to this point, saying, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? *Hope thou in God*, (see where his hope fixed,) for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance and my God." (Ps. xlii. 11.) Here we may see how hope worked in company with faith. Faith says, "I shall yet praise him," (verse 5,) though "my soul is cast down within me," (verse 6;) and hope accordingly; faith asks the soul why it is so cast down, and encourages it to expect still from the Lord: "Hope thou in God, for (here is the cause, *for*) I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance and my God."

Now it matters not to hope how hard appearances may be, nor how contrary circumstances may appear, when faith is in lively exercise upon the faithfulness of God. David had lost the Lord, and was shedding tears at his loss, when hope on the ground of faith spurred him on to expectation in the passage I have quoted. He had just said, "My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?" (Ps. xlii. 3.) But notwithstanding this, faith revived and fixed in God; and hope immediately, yea, even before the faith is mentioned, says, "*Hope in God*," notwithstanding he is gone, notwithstanding my tears, notwithstanding my soul is "cast down." And so too it was with Abraham, "who *against* hope, believed *in* hope;" (Rom. iv. 18;) that is, against all hope in *sense*, he was led to exercise hope in the *promise*. "According to that which was spoken, so shall thy seed be." (Same verse.) And this hope in the promise worked with faith in the promise, as follows: "And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb;" why not? "he staggered not at the

promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." (Rom. iv. 19, 20.)

I have now tried to show that hope is a bright anticipation of what faith believes, and I find in my heart's experience that it moves in unison with true faith. When faith is strong, hope is bright; but when faith is weak, hope is dull.

I will now attempt briefly to show how hope is tried; and how the sovereignty of God is learnt in the heart by the receiving of this grace, in the time of trial.

(1.) *Delay* tries hope. "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick," (Prov. xiii. 12,) is as true now as it was in the days of Solomon. When a soul has been going on in lively expectation and bright anticipation, and then does not receive the accomplishment of the promise at the time he has been expecting, he will droop his head in heart-sickness and gloom, and spend a few pent-up days to the deadening of his faith. Gloom, dejection, and perhaps sullenness, will follow; and the devil will tell him that it was nothing but the "hope of the hypocrite," which "shall perish;" (Job viii. 13;) and unless faith is in exercise, (which is not likely at such a time,) unbelief will rise up, and believe the devil's suggestion, and so the soul sinks below what it would ever suspect. But by-and-by a glimmer is seen; faith enlivens, hope revives, and God in his sovereign mercy and love brings his own graces into sweet and lively exercise, and the soul calls itself a thousand fools for giving way to the devil's suggestion, though he knows that his faith stands not in the power of man, but in the power of God. Here the soul is led to watch the Lord's sovereign hand in raising up hope and expectation within; and learns that it can only be exercised by him to whom it and faith are directed, according to the apostle, "That your faith and hope might be in God." (1 Peter i. 21.)

(2.) *Unbelief* tries hope. Delays would not try hope half so much, no, nor yet contrary circumstances either, if faith still held her ground in the soul; but unbelief works upon the delay, and contrary appearances make the soul think that its hope and expectation will never be realized. Under these feelings, the soul says, "My strength and my hope are perished from the Lord;" (Lam. iii. 18;) and he reasons upon the subject, "Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" (Ps. lxxvii. 7, 8, 9.) The thought of God's casting off for ever, his being favourable no more, his mercy being *clean* gone, his promise failing, his forgetting to be gracious, and his anger so working as to shut up his tender mercies, can only come from unbelief. Well might David say, "This is mine infirmity;" (ver. 10;) for hope will stand in ambush, and keep there too, when such infirmities are working. And the poor soul will cry unto the Lord to quell these feelings, and to give it hope in him and his promise again; and will watch, though he has to wait, for this blessed grace to be called forth again. The "God of hope".

will by-and-by do it; and the soul will see that its hope not only fixes in God, but is also exercised only by it, according to his sovereign will. Unbelief can frighten it off, God only can revive it. Hence the soul will say, "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him." (Lam. iii. 24.) Faith says the first part of this verse, and hope the second; and so the soul, thus exercised, proves itself to be interested in the blessing of God: "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, (here is faith,) and whose hope the Lord is, (here is hope.)" (Jer. xvii. 7.)

(3.) *Sin* tries hope. Some people profess to have such a height of experience as for sin to have no effect upon them; to cast no gloom, to bring no sorrows, to damp no grace, and to becloud no promise. It is not so with me; neither was it so with David, nor yet with Paul. I cannot sin cheaply; for it not only brings guilt and gloom upon my conscience, but often buries the graces of the blessed Spirit in my heart, so that I cannot see them; and as it regards hope, it will cast a gloom upon it, and the expectations will be clouded. Satan knows the deadening effect of sin upon all the graces of the blessed Spirit, and so labours hard to get the soul entangled here. Hope is said to go forward "within the veil;" but sin, as it were, cuts off her hand, and makes her hold back so that she cannot reach forward. The soul will then sink into gloom, dejection, and fearful forebodings, instead of looking forward in the bright anticipation of hope; and here it will remain till God works a change, sometimes squeezing out a cry, a groan, or a sigh for better days.

The Lord will deliver this poor soul, and raise up hope again in his heart. This oppression of the enemy he will surely bring his dear child out of in his own good time. "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." (Ps. xii. 5.) The soul shall be here long enough to see that he cannot exercise one grain of hope in the promise himself, but shall be looking to the Lord to exercise it in him. This the Lord will do in his own time, and the soul will bless the Lord for raising up his expectation again.

All these things, and many more too, shall the soul go through in order that he may have his hope only *in* God, and only *from* God. If circumstances are favourable and appearances pleasant, he will surely place his hope and expectation here. But the Lord is jealous, and will not have it so. Hence crosses, oppositions, dampings, glooms, dejection, foes, and disappointments are necessary to beat the soul from every other resting place but the Lord. And it is our mercy to have these things, trying as they are; for here we learn somewhat of the Lord, and somewhat of ourselves, either of which no man ever knew but through trouble. It is "tribulation" that "worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope," &c. (Rom. v. 3, 4.) Our hope must by troubles be stripped of every other refuge but the Lord. "Hope thou *in* God," (Ps. xlii. 11,) and nowhere else, for all else will disappoint. I now come to the next grace I proposed to notice.

Thirdly, *Patience*. Patience, as well as hope, goes hand in hand with faith, when in exercise. Hence we are exhorted to be "followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." (Heb. vi. 12.) That which faith believes, hope expects and patience waits for. Hence "it is good that a man should both hope, and (by patience) quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." (Ecc. iii. 20.)

Now, this grace is just as much the supernatural work of the most high God in us as faith, or any other grace. Professors who only have smoothly to wait for what they see they shall have, know neither the exercise of patience nor what patience is; for it is necessary for its true movement in waiting for the Lord, that it shall wait for that, and contentedly too, which is altogether out of sight, except as faith with its supernatural eyes sees it. Faith, hope, and patience thus go forward to unseen objects; and grasp, expect, and wait for them the Lord's own time, and thus bring salvation beforehand into the heart, whether it be temporal or spiritual. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. viii. 24, 25.) See here, that patience waits for that which it *cannot see*; hence it is supernatural, and of the operation of God, and of him alone, so that the apostle calls him "the God of patience." (Rom. xv. 5.)

Now, every heaven-taught child of God shall know from his own heart's experience, that this patience is the work of God in every moment's exercise thereof, and this he shall learn by the trial of patience, in which he shall see, if he watch the Lord's hand, that the Lord deals it out "according to his will." There is such a thing as faith being in exercise upon the truth of the Lord's promises, when patience is not in exercise to wait for the fulfilment of them. Faith, then, is like a high-bred racehorse without a bridle; and the result of it is fretfulness, peevishness, repining, complaining, murmuring, and the like, till faith, unwilling to countenance such things as these, will leave her throne; and then rebellion, kicking, and plunging will arise, for which the soul will suffer sorely. I have been here till tears have trickled from my eyes at my wretchedness and misery.

Hence we have "need of patience, that after we have done the will of God we may receive the promise," (Heb. x. 36;) doing the will of God here, is believing his promise and crediting his word. And we need patience to wait his time for fulfilling it: "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." (Ver. 37.) The "vision" of faith "is yet for an appointed time, but at the end (of the appointment) it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, (till this time,) wait for it; (here is the "need of patience;") because it will surely come, it will not tarry;" (Hab. ii. 3;) that is, beyond the time appointed.

(To be concluded in our next.)

He is no true believer to whom sin is not the greatest burden, sorrow, and trouble. (Rom. vii. 24.)—Owen.

WHOM HAVING NOT SEEN, YE LOVE.

My dear Brother in the Lord, and Friend in the Gospel of Jesus, — Your kind letter came safely to hand; and as it left you, so through mercy it found me, my wife, and my dear little ones, all in good health. And now as I write, I feel a debtor to God for every breath I draw.

Yesterday the blessed Spirit was graciously pleased to favour me in speaking from Matthew xxviii. 6: "He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." It was truly good for me both morning and evening, evening especially; and though my strength was almost spent, yet my soul was "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." O my dear friend, how light is fatigue, labour, or even affliction, if the Lord be there! how sweet his dear presence is; and how powerful to subdue every evil, to calm every tempest, and silence every enemy! and how enriching to a poor tempest-tossed soul to sit down at his dear feet, and hear his words! O the condescension of the Lord Jesus, in favouring vile sinners like us, and as we know ourselves to be, with such unmerited mercy! Dear friend, when guilty, blood-washed sinners meet around the throne, O what a meeting! And O what joys shall crown that happy meeting!

But even now, that "high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity," says, "I dwell with the humble and contrite, to revive the spirit of the contrite ones." O this condescension! God in very deed dwells with man upon the earth, even the Father and the Son take up their abode in the heart; and the bodies of the saints are temples of the Holy Ghost. Dear friend, when I feel a little of the presence of the Lord and his love in my soul, causing me to hate sin and every wicked way, to love holiness and seek after it, it makes me jealous of my own heart; and to cry out, "Lord, hold thou me up! Lord, save me from every evil! Guide me to thy holy hill in safety, and let not my heart wander from thee, the Lord."

May the Lord be with your spirit, and may our love to each other, in Jesus, grow more and more. Is it any wonder that the Lord's dear people love each other when they see something of his image in a fellow mortal? I am sure my soul feels a knitting to the Lord's people that I cannot describe; and more so, where there are free communications of soul-feeling and similarity of experience. But here is the mystery, "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." O for more of this! thanks to God for what he has bestowed.

I hope the dear Lord is with you in your own soul daily, and in the church of Christ where you worship, and with his dear servants who stand up to minister amongst you the truths of God, in comforting his little ones, seeking out his lost ones, making manifest his hidden ones, of whom the world is not worthy.

How cheering it is to see the Lord's sheep gathering to the fold! O my dear friend, how good the Lord has been to me since he sent

me to M—! Surely I can say, What hath God wrought? This is "not by might, nor by power," but by the Lord's Spirit, I hope and trust. But I shall weary you. Will you remember me in Christian love to —. I trust the Lord is making darkness light before her, and crooked things straight, keeping all the glory to himself; but testifying he will never leave her nor forsake her. Dear soul, it is a way she has not known and paths she has not trodden; but her "shoes shall be iron and brass, and as her days so shall her strength be." Also to —; I trust she is favoured with the dear Lord's presence, making this dreary wilderness like a hopeful garden, brightening all with the hope of a glorious immortality.

My kind regards to all other friends. And, my dear friend, the time is fast approaching when we must cease to correspond; when we must close our eyes on all things here below, and turn to the wall, and look into eternity. O for faith, then, to look on a dear Redeemer, a finished salvation, a justifying righteousness, death a conquered foe, the power of the grave destroyed, and a blood-marked path to eternal glory! O to drink more at the streams as I pass along, to feel more union to the Vine, of which I hope we are branches. O glorious union! never, never to be dissolved! God Almighty grant you and me many an earnest; and then, when "the redemption of the purchased possession" appears, (and, blessed be God! it is nearer than when we believed,) we shall see the whole election of grace complete in Him who is the Head of all principalities and powers.

Yours in the truth.

Manchester, April 1st, 1850.

A. B. T.

A LETTER TO HIS WIFE BY THE LATE W. J. BROOK.

To the Wife of my bosom and the Daughter of my vows.—Many changes and frequent are the lot of us both. A little measure of peace and rest in God, and great portions of darkness, deadness, unbelief, and distance from God; yet all these things serve as ballast to me and you too. We are highly favoured by the Almighty himself in his kind providence as well as his grace, for it is his grace that directs his providence; and we need many, many changes to keep us in the fear of his name, and in that low place where his hand is much desired and sought. What we stand in need of is more life. I feel this sensibly. I want more divine life in my soul in secret with God; but I am exercised, not so much with the enjoyment of life as with feelings of life, if you can understand what this means. I am plagued with the corruptions of my heart, with much darkness of mind, and with much weakness of soul. Now life moves in all these things: in prayer, waiting, watching, confession, pleading, &c.; and we are to have "the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." You have tasted that the Lord is gracious, but then you are a babe, and need more of the sincere milk of the word; and this can

only be had by close waiting upon Him who has promised to give us another Comforter, who shall abide with us for ever. It is not looking to past experience, helps, and comforts, that will do to satisfy our souls in God; it is the express witness of the Spirit with our spirit which can alone do the business; and this witness is sure and certain in the court of conscience. It is not looking to a law work, nor to a gospel work that will stablish our hearts; but it is receiving the testimony of the Holy Ghost that seals us to the day of redemption. And how is this to be had? It is to be had from Jesus Christ. The Spirit is called the Holy Spirit of promise, the promise of God the Father, in and through Christ. To Christ we are directed to seek; and he has promised to give us the Spirit, to guide us into all truth. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink; he that believeth on me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." But the devil's aim is to keep us from that fountain. He does not object so much to our looking at evidences, as our looking to Christ; there he makes the most desperate resistance, by darkening the mind, making the heart fearful, making us strong in ourselves, blackening God's character, and setting before us our own villany, infusing pride, rebellion, unbelief, and hardness of heart. We are both tried in many and singular ways, I have sometimes thought; but it is a mercy that our faith in God increases, and the love of each other in Christ abounds. It is with me, for the most part, a hard service; but we are commanded to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. We both find God on our side; let us cleave close to him, and to those very few whom God hath joined together in our affections.

Kind love to yourself and the dear children.

W. J. B.

A LETTER FROM THE LATE JOHN M'KENZIE.

My dear Friend,—I fear by this you will think I have lost sight of your letter, or have forgotten you, having delayed to answer yours till now; but this is not the case. Since I saw you, I have, like Martha, been cumbered with many things and much serving, but still my heart desires to sensibly feel and enjoy from time to time the *good part* which Mary chose, which shall never be taken from us. All earthly comforts shall be taken from us; our families, friends, and spiritual brethren (in this life) shall be taken away; health, wealth, and the natural life of flesh, and bread shall be taken away; every earthly pleasure beneath the skies shall vanish away; but, my dear friend, Mary's *good part* shall never be taken away, shall never fade or corrupt, (1 Pet. i. 4,) shall never come to an end. (John x. 28). And if we prove to be the Lord's humble followers and lovers, (as I trust we are,) all hell, the power and deceit of sin within us, our creature helplessness, the allurements of the world, the snares of Satan, the persecution of enemies, the perils of false brethren, and the blows of true ones, shall never be able to take away this good part from us.

Last Lord's-day morning I was dwelling on David's sins and God's grace in David's heart, from 1 Sam. xiii. 14. (See also Ps. lxxxix. 20; Acts xiii. 22.) I showed David's blemishes and David's beauties; David's infirmities and David's power; the one proceeding from David's evil heart, and the other from God's grace. But I cannot now give you the sermon, you will find the substance of it in the two books of Samuel.

When I read your letter I felt a reunion of spirit with it, and thought you were highly favoured; and I was very glad to find it so.

Give my kind regards to all the friends of our Lord Jesus; and wishing you every new covenant blessing, I am yours very sincerely in the truth,

J. M'KENZIE.

Preston, Sept. 22, 1848.

GOSPEL RIGHTEOUSNESS.

BY JOHN BUNYAN.

(Continued from page 16.)

Perhaps some may object, that from this way of reasoning it is apparent that sanctification is first; since the soul may have faith, and so a principle of grace in it, and yet, as yet it cannot find Christ to feed and refresh the soul withal.

Answer. From this way of reasoning, it is not at all apparent that sanctification, or a principle of grace, is in the soul before righteousness is imputed and the soul made perfectly righteous thereby. And for the clearing up of this, let me propose a few things.

Justifying righteousness, to wit, the obedience of that one Man, Christ, is imputed to the sinner, to justify him in God's sight: for his law calls for perfect righteousness, and before that be come to, and put upon the poor sinner, God cannot bestow other spiritual blessings upon him; because by the law he has pronounced him accursed; by which curse he is also holden, until a righteousness shall be found upon the sinner that the law and divine justice can approve of and be contented with. So then, as to the justification of the sinner, there must be a righteousness for God; I say, for the sinner, and for God: for the sinner to be clothed with, and for God to look upon, that he may, for the sake thereof, in a way of justice, bless the sinner with the forgiveness of sins. For forgiveness of sins is the next thing that followeth upon the appearance of the sinner before God in the righteousness of Christ. (Romans iv. 6, 7.)

Now, upon this forgiveness follows the second blessing. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: and so, consequently, hath obtained for us the forgiveness of sins. For he that is delivered from the curse, has received forgiveness of sins, or rather, is made partaker thereof. Now, being made a partaker thereof, the second blessing immediately follows, to wit, the blessing of Abraham, that is, the promise of the Spirit through faith. (Galatians iii. 13, 14.)

But now, although it be of absolute necessity that imputed righteousness be first to the soul; that is, that perfect righteousness be found upon the sinner first by God, that he may bestow other blessings in a way of justice; then let God put the righteousness of his Son upon me, and by virtue of that, let the blessing of God come into me; and by virtue of that, let me be made to see myself a sinner, and Christ's righteousness, and my need of it, in the doctrine of it, as it is revealed in the Scriptures of truth. Let me then believe this doctrine to be true, and be brought by my belief to repentance for my sins, to hungering and thirsting vehemently after this righteousness. Yea, let me pray, and cry, and sigh, and groan, day and night, to the God of this righteousness, that he will of grace make me a partaker. And let me thus be prostrate before God, all the time that in wisdom he shall think fit; and in his own time he shall show me that I am a justified person, a pardoned person, a person in whom the Spirit of God has dwelt for some time, though I knew it not.

So then, justification before God is one thing, and justification in my own eyes is another; not that there are two justifications, but the same righteousness by which I stand justified before God may be seen of God when I am ignorant of it; yea, for the sake of it I may be received, pardoned, and accounted righteous of him, and yet I may not understand it. Yea, further, he may proceed in the way of blessing to bless me with additional blessings, and yet I be ignorant of it.

So that the question is not, Do I *find* that I am righteous? but, *Am* I so? Does God find me so, when he sees that the righteousness of his Son is upon me, being made over to me by an act of his grace? For "I am justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." (Romans iii. 24.)

I am, then, made righteous first by the righteousness of another; and because I am righteous, God accepts my person as such, and bestows upon me his grace; which, at first, for want of skill and experience in the word of righteousness, I make use of but poorly, and have need to be certified that I am made righteous, and that I have eternal life; not by faith first and immediately, but by the written word, which is called "the word of faith;" which word declares unto me (to whom grace, and so faith in the seed of it, is given) that I have eternal life, and that I should with boldness, in peace and joy, believe in the Son of God. (Heb. v. 13; Rom. xv. 13; 1 John v. 13.)

But again. I, in the first acts of my faith, when I come to Christ, do not accept him because I know I am righteous, either with imputed righteousness or with that which is inherent. Both these, as to my present privilege in them, may be hidden from my eyes, and I only put upon taking encouragement to lay hold of Christ for life and righteousness, as he is set forth to be a propitiation before

mine eyes, in the word of the truth of the gospel; to which word I adhere as or because I find I want peace with God in my soul, and because I am convinced that the means of peace is not to be found anywhere but in Jesus Christ. Now, by thus adhering to him, I find stay for my soul and peace to my conscience, because the word doth ascertain to me that he that believeth on him hath remission of sins, hath eternal life, and shall be saved from the wrath to come.

But, alas! who knows the many straits, and as I may say, the stress of weather, I mean the cold blasts of hell with which the poor soul is assaulted, betwixt its receiving of grace and its sensible closing with Jesus Christ? None, I dare say, but it and its fellows: "The heart knows its own bitterness; and a stranger intermeddled not with his joy." (Prov. xiv. 10.) No sooner doth Satan perceive what God is doing with the soul in a way of grace and mercy, than he endeavoureth what he may to make the receiving thereof bitter and wearisome work to the sinner. O what mists, what mountains, what clouds, what darkness, what objections, what false apprehensions of God, of Christ, of grace, of the word, and of the soul's condition, doth he now lay before it, and haunt it with; whereby he dejecteth, casteth down, daunteth, distresseth, and almost driveth it into despair! Now, by reason of these things, faith (and all the grace that is in the soul) is hard put to it to come at the promise of Christ; as it is said, when the tempest and great danger of shipwreck lay upon the vessel in which Paul was, they had "much work to come by the boat." (Acts xxvii. 16.) For Satan's design is, if he cannot keep the soul from Christ, to make his coming to him and closing with him as hard, as difficult and troublesome, as he by his devices can. But faith, true justifying faith, as a grace, is not weary by all that Satan can do; but meditateth upon the word, and taketh stomach and courage, fighteth and crieth, and by crying and fighting, by help from heaven, its way is made through all the oppositions that appear so mighty, and draweth up at last to Jesus Christ, into whose bosom it putteth the soul, where for the time it sweetly resteth, after its marvellous tossings to and fro.

And besides what hath been said, let me yet illustrate this truth unto you by this familiar similitude.

Suppose a man, a traitor, that by the law should die for his sin, yet may not the king of his clemency pardon this man; yea, order that his pardon should be drawn up and sealed, and so in every sense be made sure; and yet, for the present, keep all this close enough from the ears or the knowledge of the person therein concerned? Yea, may not the king after all leave this person to sue for and obtain this pardon with many tears and heart-achings, with many fears and dubious cogitations?

Why, this is the case between God and the soul that he saveth. He saveth him, pardoneth him, and secureth him from the curse and death that is due unto sin, but yet doth not tell him so; but he ascends in his great suit unto God for it. Only this difference we must make between God and the potentates of this world: God cannot pardon before the sinner stands before him righteous by the

righteousness of Christ; because he has in judgment, and justice, and righteousness, threatened and concluded that he that wants righteousness shall die.

And I say again, because this righteousness is God's and at God's disposal only, it is God that must make a man righteous before he can forgive him his sins, or bestow upon him his secondary blessings: to wit, his Spirit, and the graces thereof. And I say again, it must be this righteousness, for it can be no other, that justifies a sinner from sin in the sight of God, and from the sentence of the law.

REVIEW.

A Stone from the Brook; being a Faithful Letter to Frederick Tryon.

By WILLIAM BROWN, Godmanchester. London: Groombridge and Sons, 5, Paternoster-row.

Whatever strife or division may have existed between men during life, it usually ceases at the grave. When the silent tomb has closed over the remains even of an enemy, good feeling usually dictates to the survivor a complete cessation of arms. And as in nature, so in grace. Where can we find a more decided instance of enmity in one man against another than David had to endure from Saul? And yet when Saul fell, David "mourned, and wept, and fasted." Whatever solemn feelings he might have had about Saul's eternal state, whatever natural exultation might have arisen in his breast at his own approaching elevation to the throne, or whatever admiration he might have felt of the wonder-working hand of God, his whole soul was absorbed in grief and sorrow when tidings came of the death of his mortal foe. Who is there that desires to fear God—we might say, what man of generous and noble feelings—does not but admire this beautiful trait in the character of David, the man after God's own heart?

We only know of one case in which a contrary proceeding can be justified—when a man's *principles* are pernicious and destructive, and these principles survive him, and are doing injury when he himself has ceased to propagate them. Then tenderness for the dead may give way to tenderness for the living; and the repose of the tomb may be violated if the ashes of the departed still survive in his followers, and derive strength from his name and memory.

The death of the late lamented John M'Kenzie is too recent, and was attended with circumstances too touching, to be easily forgotten by our readers. It may excite, then, some surprise in them to learn that an attack has been made upon him in a pamphlet written by Mr. Tryon, of James Déeping, the object of which, as far as poor M'Kenzie is concerned, is evidently to pronounce him a lost man, a false prophet, and to have died altogether a deceived character. Knowing sufficiently the general character of Mr. T.'s publications, it was our intention not to read it; but the above Letter of Mr. Brown has called our attention to it; for compelled, as it were, by his esteem and affection for his departed friend, and by indignation against his

assailant, Mr. B. has taken up the subject, and with some skill and force has thrown the "Stone from the Brook" which appears at the head of the present article. We have been led, therefore, to procure Mr. T.'s pamphlet, in order to see how far Mr. Brown is justified in considering his departed friend cut off and condemned by it; and having read very carefully the part which refers to Mr. M'Kenzie, with the desire to gather up the author's real opinion concerning our deceased friend and fellow-labourer, we are sorry to say, that we cannot trace a single expression which would warrant us to think that Mr. T. believes him to have been saved even as by fire. We should be glad, even for Mr. T.'s own sake, to find one word faintly expressive of a hope of this kind: but, so far from that, there is not a single term of kindness used towards him, natural or spiritual. The affecting circumstances of his death, which few, we believe, could read with dry eyes, seem not to have in the slightest degree touched even his natural feelings. He is as cold, as stern, as austere, as unmoved as if there were not one tender string in his heart. This is most extraordinary, as we have always understood him to be a man of kind, warm, tender feelings. But, really, to view him standing at the tomb of poor M'Kenzie, as unmoved as the lifeless corpse beneath, one would suppose, were there not evidence to the contrary, that there was not one tender feeling, natural or spiritual, in his bosom. Two words keep sounding in our mind ever since what Mr. Brown calls this "cruel, malicious attack," as descriptive, not of his case and character, but of his present spirit towards those whom he considers his opponents—"implacable, unmerciful."

As far as regards ourselves, we have neither intention nor inclination to notice his attacks, and should have continued silent as heretofore, had he not sought to overthrow the spiritual state and ministry of one whom we, in common with all his friends, loved and esteemed so highly. But were we now silent, it might be considered as a tacit acquiescence in Mr. T.'s views of our departed friend; that we had not a word to offer in his defence; but were forced by the arguments of his assailant to believe that M'Kenzie had perished in his sins.

We have also, as will be seen, some evidence to offer, which may serve to remove a false impression from Mr. T.'s own mind; and being in possession of this, it would seem an act of unkindness to him, as well as to the church generally, were we, by our silence, to suppress it.

As, then, there is "a time to keep silence," so there is "a time to speak;" and as regards the name and memory of our departed friend, that time seems to have arrived. Indeed, apart from those circumstances of friendship and esteem which may seem particularly to influence ourselves, it is enough to provoke the indignation of any one who has the least knowledge of the two men, to see one so superior in every respect to his assailant—in experience, in grace, in knowledge of the truth, in gifts, in usefulness, in acceptability to the church of God, dragged, as it were, out of his tomb, worried, and trampled upon by one who, a few years back, had been a personal friend, had received him into his house and pulpit, thought and spoken

most highly of him, quoted his very words, and sat as a learner at his feet. To rend such ties one would have thought heart-breaking work; that if an imperative necessity commanded a separation, some trace of former feeling would have lingered behind; that whatever suspicions might cross his mind of his former friend's state and standing, there would have been some attempt to gather up what was once commended to his conscience; and, at least, when death closed the scene, the survivor would feel some touches of former affection, would drop a tear to his memory, and say, "I cannot forget the past; I once felt a union with him; I fear in some points he was deceived; but I cannot give him up; and hope one day to be with him where all divisions cease, and where we shall both eternally adore the grace that saved us both, and me especially, the vilest of the vile."

Few, we think, will deny that such a course would have been more worthy of the Christian and the man. Reverse the scene. Suppose that God had taken Tryon, and left M'Kenzie. What would Mr. T.'s friends have thought and said, if M'Kenzie living had dealt with Tryon dead, as Tryon living has dealt with M'Kenzie dead? M'Kenzie was incapable of such conduct; but had he done so, his real friends would have blushed for him, as we hope Mr. T.'s real friends, for flatterers are unworthy of the name, are now blushing for him.

We would fain hope that under the rough garment of the prophet, which Mr. T. now wears, there may be some lingering tender feelings; but as regards his late pamphlet, we must honestly confess we cannot discern a trace of them. No surgeon ever struck his knife more coolly into the dead body of a man upon the dissecting-table than Mr. T. into the state and standing of poor M'Kenzie. Not a check or a fear seems to have been felt lest he be persecuting Jesus in his members, lest he be touching the apple of God's eye, lest he wound the feelings of relatives and friends, lest he grieve the church of Christ, lest he stumble the weak, lest he sow the seeds of endless division and strife, lest he injure the cause of experimental religion by attempting to overthrow one of its most able ministers, lest he be aiding Satan in perplexing the tried and tempted family of God, lest he be violating the precepts and spirit of the Gospel, lest he open the mouths of the ungodly, or lest he plant thorns in his own dying pillow. Not one consideration of this kind seems to have given him even a momentary check; but having persuaded himself that M'Kenzie was a false prophet, if any such thoughts crossed his mind, he seems completely to have discarded them, and shutting his eyes to every evidence in M'Kenzie's favour, to have bent all the force of his mind and strength of his pen to one point and object only—to hold him up to the church of God as a deceived man.

And what are his proofs? They seem to be chiefly two.

1. The *first* is a piece that M'Kenzie wrote some years ago upon "False Prophets," which Mr. T. assumes was written against *him*. We give an extract from Mr. T.'s pamphlet, which will show his mind upon this subject:

"For a considerable time I did not know Mr. McKenzie's mind respecting my position, nor did I at first suspect that his piece on 'False Prophets' was in his own opinion applicable to me. That was published in Standard, September, 1845, and has been much upon my mind many times since. I knew that the pit must either be filled up by him that dug it, or else one or other of us must fall into it; it is not a rod for reproof, but an instrument of destruction; whoever it applies to, is accounted throughout a lost man, 'Their damnation slumbereth not.' Early in the following year, I asked him to preach for me at Deeping, little thinking whom I was asking, and while his answer was expressed in language implying much personal esteem, he makes it evident that as regards my ministry, he must apply his remarks on 'False Prophets' to me. This was not shown me directly, for in January, 1846, I had nearly forgotten the piece in September, 1845; but after I had again written and received no answer, and many days went over, I was one day when from home, impressed with an expectation that I should find all his present conduct explained if I looked at the piece on 'False Prophets;' accordingly I went home, found the piece, and the net hid in the pit was as plain as possible, though before I had quite overlooked it. After this I drew his attention to it, but never could get any confession or any alteration. 'By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.' He said, 'I have been informed from the mouth of many witnesses, and by letter, of the remarks you made last spring in Zoar and Eden street pulpits, and as I believe the above remarks to be very unjustifiable and uncalled-for in the place they were made, of course on this point we are not agreed.' 'When they (my friends) depart from the path of peace and order, and act contrary to the Scriptures, I hope never to follow them. The text (Ezekiel ix. 5, 6, and context) you took at Zoar, and the remarks you made upon it, and the persons you had in view, were quite at variance with each other, and misapplied, in my judgment. Those of the Lord's true servants and his best taught people who heard it, are all, with myself, much grieved at it, and of one mind respecting it.' But though I wrote requesting him to state what he had heard, and wrote without any idea that he had previously cut me down in September Number of Standard, yet he never answered me, but continued his course till his own net entangled his own feet, and if weighed in his own scales with his own bag of weights, he would be condemned as a False Prophet by his own showing."

It will be observed, 1, That Mr. T. gives no *date* to M'Kenzie's letters; and 2, No *extract* to verify his assertion that "he makes it evident that as regards my ministry he must apply his remarks on false prophets to me." M'Kenzie declined his invitation on the ground that "two could not walk together except they be agreed." This is the letter that Mr. T. quotes; but he has made it appear, we trust not designedly, as if this letter were written after he had drawn M'Kenzie's attention to his impression that the piece on "False Prophets" was written against him.

This was not the case, as the letter was written *before* Mr. T. had any such impression. What correspondence took place *afterwards* we cannot tell, but a letter of M'Kenzie's is now lying before us, in which are these words: "I do thank the Lord I only wrote two short letters to him (Mr. T.) on the subject."

It is, therefore, our firm belief that Mr. T. cannot produce any letter whatever, where even by implication M'Kenzie acknowledges the piece on "False Prophets" was aimed against him.

But, besides this *negative* evidence, we have *positive* proof to offer.

M'Kenzie himself assured us that he never intended Mr. Tryon, or had the least allusion to him, in his piece on "False Prophets." This, happily, we are in a position to prove. A letter is now lying before us, dated "Preston, May 9th, 1846," written by M'Kenzie immediately after the receipt of Mr. Tryon's sermon preached at the opening of Jireh Chapel, London, which sermon was taken down in shorthand and forwarded to him. From this letter we make the following extract. Speaking of Mr. T. in connexion with that sermon, he says,

"I begin to think that there must be some latent enmity in his heart against vital truth. This I suspect from his dragging into his angry accusations the piece I wrote on 'False Prophets,' in September last. It is evident that piece stirred up his anger; and *I am certain I had no eye to him when I wrote.* It is very remarkable that at that time I received several anonymous letters from enemies of truth, quarrelling with that piece; and it is strange Mr. Tryon is found in company with them."

Here is M'Kenzie's positive declaration that he had no eye to Mr. Tryon in that piece; and yet upon a mere impression, and that a false one, that he meant him, Mr. T. has cut him off and sent him to hell. This shows the danger of trusting to mere *impressions*. This is indeed "Leaven leavening the Lump;" for this false impression in Mr. T.'s mind, like leaven in dough, worked and worked until it soured the whole mass, turned all his former kindly feelings towards M'Kenzie into wormwood and gall, and at last has broken forth into this attack upon him when he has left time for eternity—the greatest outrage, we believe, against all right feeling, natural or spiritual, in a man professing godliness, that this generation has witnessed.

But one would have thought the internal evidence of the piece on "False Prophets" would have removed the impression from Mr. T.'s mind as soon as opportunity was given to examine it. Impressions, indeed, we cannot help; but it is folly to nurse and indulge them in the very teeth of evidence which should serve to disprove them. If a man act or write merely upon impressions, without testing whence their origin or what their effect, upon surmises which may be utterly groundless; or upon reports which may prove completely false, one may reasonably suspect whether in such things he is led by the Spirit of God. Now, there was ample internal evidence that M'Kenzie had not the slightest reference to Mr. T. or his ministry; but, being blinded by this false impression, he overlooks all this, absorbed apparently by one overwhelming idea, "he meant *me.*"

If it were M'Kenzie's object by that piece to put down Mr. T., how came he to write so obscurely? Or if his character were drawn there, how came Mr. T. to read that piece, probably again and again, and not have the least suspicion that he was pointed at? Is Mr. T.'s ministerial character so little known, or so common-place, that in a long piece, written with M'Kenzie's usual discrimination, there is not a feature that resembles him? If the piece were really aimed

at him, how came the portrait to be so unlike, or so obscure? Did any of his friends believe he was intended? And how came neither Mr. T. nor any of his friends to make the discovery till some months afterwards? It seems a contradiction to write a piece against a certain individual, and yet no one be able to discover that it was meant for him. It would be as absurd as for the police to describe a runaway as a "tall, thin, sandy-haired man," when he was short, stout, thick-set, and with hair as black as a coal. We believe the truth of the matter to be this. M'Kenzie had been hearing a certain minister supplying at L—, and had very peculiar and most miserable feelings under him. The man he afterwards discovered was a person of bad character. From this and a similar experience once in London, he was led to write his piece on "False Prophets." Thus we are in a position to disprove Mr. T.'s surmise, for it is but a surmise, that it was aimed at him. Why M'Kenzie did not explain these circumstances to Mr. T., we cannot say; and it would have been well if he had done so, for it would have saved much misapprehension; but the facts are as we have stated.

But viewing Mr. T.'s argument as it stands, it would seem to be this: "God, early in 1845, gave me a special commission to warn the churches, and placed me in a position similar to that of Jeremiah and Micaiah. If any one who has the opportunity of hearing me preach, or of reading my writings, wilfully oppose and resist my testimony, he *ipso facto* opposes and resists God; and if he die without repentance of that sin, is certainly lost." If this be not his argument, why is so much stress laid upon M'K.'s piece on "False Prophets" being aimed at him?

But surely salvation or damnation does not hinge upon receiving or not receiving Mr. T.'s testimony. It hinges upon faith in Jesus Christ, not upon faith in Mr. Tryon. Mr. T. may be all that he believes himself to be—a prophet commissioned of God; but it surely is not a damning sin to doubt it. What he points out from the word of God it is a sin to resist, because it is resisting the truth of God. But to doubt his special mission is another matter; and if this be a damning sin, there are without question very many of God's children in this land who are guilty of it.

2. Mr. T.'s *second* argument to prove the deceived state of poor M'Kenzie, is his prophesying he should recover, as the prophecy never came to pass. He says,

"The writer of the piece on "False Prophets" fought hard to expose my ministry to reproach and contempt, as others still do; but his own predictions respecting himself did not come to pass; and the judgment he pronounces on such is, If the prophet's predictions do not come to pass, he is a false prophet."

Here are two mis-statements. In the *first* place, M'Kenzie never "fought hard to expose Mr. T.'s ministry to reproach and contempt." He neither preached nor wrote against him. Mr. Brown tells us in a note, "The summer before his death, in a conversation I had with him, he told me he had thoughts of writing on the subject; but was

stayed by these words: 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay it, saith the Lord.'" It is evident from this that M'Kenzie would have written plainly and openly against Mr. T., had he written at all. But he endured in silence, committing his cause to Him that judgeth righteously. And as we have already disproved the charge that the piece upon "False Prophets" was written against Mr. T., the whole of that accusation falls to the ground. Nor, *secondly*, did M'Kenzie ever predict his own recovery.

An extract from his *Diary* (now published) will perhaps throw some light on the case:

"*March 3rd, 1849.* This evening (Saturday) I was taken suddenly and dangerously ill, from bleeding from the lungs; about a pint of blood came from the lungs at once, and I was reduced to great weakness and apparent danger of life. I lay awake the whole night, not knowing but that I might die any minute: in this state, my mind troubled and very uneasy, my sins and the guilt of them lay heavy upon me. I felt myself a poor vile sinner, and guilt pierced my heart; many of the sins of my youth stood before me in array: but I particularly felt the guilt of the cold, carnal, worldly state of mind I had been in for several months back, and from which I had been praying the Lord to deliver me. Nothing for a while could I feel but my vileness and guilt, and that not in a way I wished; but fears and uneasiness of my dangerous state. About midnight, however, I felt contrition and godly sorrow come over my heart for my vile sins, and a hearty confession of them to the Lord. O how did I pour out my soul to the Lord, and frankly tell him of all my vile sins, and I did loathe myself on account of them! My heart was now a little relieved to find I could feel grief and repentance for sin, and I thanked the Lord for it. The spirit of prayer was in my heart, and I cried to the Lord; but faith was weak, and fears many; and when I thought of death, though I had not terrible fears of it, yet there was a shrinking and timidity in the thought of its approach. I continued in this state till about noon next day, when these words entered into my heart with some sweetness: 'He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.' I felt anxious to have the chapter read where these words were; and I asked my wife to read the 7th chapter of John, but she read the 11th; and as she read the four first verses of that chapter, the Lord so blessed them to my soul with such overcoming power and sweetness, and my heart was filled with such peculiar joy, love, and soul-melting sensations, that I could do nothing but lie and weep. I was so overcome, I was obliged to ask my wife to stop reading, as I could bear no more. I then felt such sweetness, calmness, and love to God, and all my misery, guilt, and distress were gone, that I believe then I could have died. This blessing caused me to hope that I should soon recover; but my life for many days being in doubt, there was for a few days a calm and submissive looking to the Lord. Appeared to improve till the 14th, when I felt very ill in my stomach, and soon became reduced very low and weak, and as great fears as ever came over me that I should not get better."

We have surely a right to take M'Kenzie's own statement, especially as it was written down at the time, and without the least reference to any question that might arise upon it. Let us analyse this statement, in order to see whether it contains any *prediction* respecting himself.

1. On the evening of March 3rd, 1849, he is taken suddenly and dangerously ill.

2. A great sense of guilt falls upon his conscience, with fears and uneasiness arising out of his dangerous state.

3. At midnight contrition and godly sorrow come over his heart, with hearty confession of sin and self-loathing.

4. Some little relief is obtained thereby; a spirit of prayer is felt; but faith is weak and fears are many; he has no terrible fears of death, but a timidity at the thought of its approach.

5. At noon next day these words enter into his heart with some sweetness: "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

6. He feels anxious to have the chapter read where these words were. His wife by mistake reads John xi.

7. As she reads the four first verses, the Lord so blesses them to his soul that he could "do nothing but lie and weep." All his distress is gone, and he believes he could there and then have died.

8. This blessing caused him to *hope* that he should soon recover; but his life being in doubt, there was a calm and submissive looking to the Lord.

Now, where is there any *prophecy* here, *prediction*, or *foretelling* of his own recovery? There is but a *hope*, and that not a strong one. His grand concern was about his soul; and when his guilt and fears are removed by a sense of the love of God, a *hope* springs up about the body. But he never stands forth as a prophet, and boldly *predicts* his own recovery. How unjust, therefore, how unfair, how invidious, to wrest this *hope* into a positive prediction! And how unbecoming, now that the poor man is gone, to attempt to prove from this that he was deceived altogether!

A friend of ours who visited him at Darley Dale at this time, and to whom he opened his mind very unreservedly, told us lately that he always spoke with great uncertainty about his recovery; and that, referring to John xi. 4, he dwelt chiefly upon his illness being "to the glory of God." It was *that* part of the text that seemed chiefly riveted on his mind, and in the fulfilment of that lay his most anxious desires.

Mr. Brown, we think, has written very well upon this point, admitting with candour that, as regarded his recovery, he was deceived by a false impression.

"As to the letter written at Darley Dale in the month of May, we must consider the peculiar influences which operated on his mind. The disease of which he died was of the most flattering nature. The physician there confidently asserted that his lungs were sound, and no danger was to be apprehended. In his own simple, touching language, he confesses he had a desire to live. 'I could not feel the heart-strings of my affections cut from this life.' Can we wonder that he listened to the flattering assurances of his physician, seconded and strengthened as they were by an equally flattering complaint? His impression that he should certainly recover, founded upon the passage, 'This sickness is not unto death,' was entirely a delusion. I have no hesitation in saying this. Such was the sterling nature of his religion, that his true friends

may well afford to allow this admission. We may fearlessly remove the stains a vessel of gold may have received. His hope for eternity was no more suspended on the literal fulfilment of this passage, than was the hope of the early disciples upon their mistaken views of the real nature of the Messiah's kingdom. He tells us plainly where his hope rested; namely, 'on the love, blood, and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.'

"I was grieved the very moment I saw the letter in the 'Standard;' for it appeared to me as blending and confounding natural impressions concerning the poor frail body, with the impressions and operations of the blessed Spirit on the soul. The Spirit's work is spiritual; it is to take of Christ and the things that pertain to Christ, and reveal and impress them upon the heart. Here there is no mistake. 'The Spirit itself beareth witness.'

"The wisest and best taught men have been deceived by false impressions; but this does not in the least invalidate their experience of the love and power of Christ in their souls. John Newton records an example of this in his own case. He was going to take charge of a congregation at Warwick for a time, when these words were impressed on his mind: 'Fear not, Paul, for I have much people in this city.' He says he was afterwards disappointed at finding that John Newton was not Paul; neither was Warwick Corinth.

"Another case I will mention; a living example—that aged servant of Christ, John Vinall, of Brighton. He has a strong impression that he shall recover from a paralytic attack he has suffered from for years; and though he has long lost the use of one side, he says that even if he should die, and be buried, he shall rise from his grave; so certain is he that the Lord has told him he shall recover.

"Now here is a dear, old, savoury man of God labouring under a delusion. Is, therefore, all he has experienced a delusion? The man who thus concludes is himself deluded. To have impressions on the mind is one thing; and to pretend to the gift of prophecy is another.

"In the piece written on 'False Prophets,' the characters pointed out, as I understand it, are those who profess to foretell future events: the very pretension to which gift, in these days, I consider awfully presumptuous. 'If the prophet's predictions do not come to pass, he is a false prophet.'

"The inference you draw from putting together his piece on 'False Prophets,' his letter written at Darley Dale, and his death, three months afterwards, is altogether false. He did not pretend to be a man gifted with the power of foretelling future events. The letter written in Derbyshire was a private letter, unfolding the workings and exercises of his mind. We can now separate what was of the flesh from what was of the Spirit. This, in the spiritual warfare of a child of God, is more than half the battle; to know what is from the Lord, and what from self, and what from Satan. You seem to be a perfect stranger to these exercises."

Poor M'Kenzie hoped, from his feelings when John xi. 4, was read to him, that he should be restored; but it was only a hope, and that a flickering one. Now, to argue from this that he was a deceived man altogether, is most unjust. Christ and his gospel are firm, unshaken realities; and faith in Christ and his gospel is a firm reality too; and if M'Kenzie was a partaker of this precious faith, of which there is every evidence, a wrong impression upon his mind upon a merely temporal matter could not destroy that firm reality.

The grand question, after all, is, Was M'Kenzie a partaker of grace? Had he experienced that work of the blessed Spirit upon his

soul, whereby he had passed from death unto life? He was not an obscure, unknown character. His experience, his ministry, his life and conversation, were known to hundreds of God's living family. He was much esteemed and beloved in the churches, and had many testimonies that God owned and blessed his ministry. Is all this to be set aside and trampled under foot? Are there not many in this country, as well acquainted with a work of grace as Mr. T., who can testify that M'Kenzie's ministry was blessed to their soul? Is their voice not to be heard? No; they will rise up and call him blessed; and all the attacks made upon him will only more endear him to their hearts.

We may, perhaps, resume the subject in a following number, but for the present we conclude with a forcible extract from Mr. Brown's letter.

"However, it is a sweet relief to me to know that, while you are thus employed, he is employed so differently, singing the high praises of God and the Lamb, with his golden harp, before the throne. You may shoot out your arrows after him, even bitter words; but he is far beyond your reach. Happy soul! his sighs and groans have for ever ceased. He has fought the good fight, and finished his course. He was an honoured champion for the truth, the truth as it is in Jesus. He now rests from his labours, and his works do follow him. Vain are all your endeavours to spoil him of his crown. Long will his name and memory be dear to the church of God in this land. His clearness in doctrine, his closeness and discrimination in experience, together with his uniform uprightness and consistency of character and conduct as a man of God, may well cause his loss to be deeply lamented."

(To be continued.)

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

If there were anything that the Father loved better than Christ, he would have kept that out of his hand; but having given him all things, it says there is nothing he can lay in balance with him.—*Ralph Erskine.*

Pilgrim! sorrow and sighing, strong cries and many tears, are thy frequent portion here below. Couldst thou live, as thou art often charged as living by thine opposers, viz., in all manner of sin, without remorse, why then there would be an end to the far greater part of thy troubles. Would a man grieve, and hate himself with perfect hatred, in feeling and in committing that in which he saw no evil? Certainly not. Why, then, dost thou groan day by day? Because thou hast a body of indwelling sin, which works strongly in carnal and corrupt desires; and sometimes, to thy sore grief, makes its appearance in the members of thy body: "If we say (we, the disciples of Jesus) that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." "There is not a just man upon earth that liveth and sinneth not." Nothing is more difficult than for a believer to draw a line of distinction between the flesh and the Spirit, when he is sorely tried by the absence of his Beloved, the temptations of Satan, and the horrible workings of his own deceitful heart. "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me, O God, from secret faults."—*H. Fowler.*

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 a 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. 10.

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VOL. XVI.

ON ORIGINAL SIN, IN THAT EXPERIENCE WHICH
GOD TEACHETH; AND OF THE REAL CONDITION
OF ALL MEN IN A STATE OF NATURE.

(Continued from page 79.)

Having considered a few particulars as to soul-exercise, or that tribulation of mind which a quickened sinner is called to pass through, under this scripture: "They shall be all taught of God," as to the origin of his state by nature, and which cannot be scripturally known or understood in any other way; and having brought also under consideration this portion of truth: "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins;" let us farther inquire, What in reality is couched in the expression DEAD?

There was a time when the church at Ephesus, to whom the apostle wrote, had no life, but were "dead in trespasses and sins." Words cannot be plainer. Natural men, professors and profane, may wrest and twist the Scriptures to different meanings; but there are a few amongst men, in every age, who dwell alone and are not reckoned among the nations; who know and believe it to be, as the apostle was inspired to write it, that all men in a state of nature are spiritually DEAD; but all men are not quickened to know and feel it. Yet that cannot alter the sterling reality of the truth. No, not at all.

I hesitate not to affirm, that the word "DEAD" implies nothing less than an utter destruction or annihilation to the holiness of God in our nature, by Adam's first act of disobedience, without any known or positive act of our own, as descendants from him; and the substitution, in its room and stead, of Satan and his kingdom, in all its multifarious abominations, cruelties, and atrocities, which ever have

been, are now, or ever will be perpetrated to the end of time; and whether by professor or profane, in ecclesiastical or civil government.

But let us illustrate it a little in what is recorded of and by the apostle Paul, in reference to himself. He did not always see the nature of sin in one and the same light. No. Paul was not naturally a profane man, but a naturally religious man, if I may use the expression. Of his natural religious privileges he writes thus: "I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, yet brought up in this city (Jerusalem) at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers; and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders; from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished." (Acts xxii. 3—5.) Thus there was a time when Paul's religion led him to breathe out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord; a time when he being exceedingly mad against them, persecuted them unto strange cities. He consented also to the martyrdom of Stephen, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. And further, he says, "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth; which things I also did in Jerusalem." When many of the saints were put to death he gave his voice against them, and many he compelled to blaspheme. This is the character he gives of himself in a state of nature, when he so zealously went about to establish a righteousness of his own, according to the law; for he says of himself, as touching that righteousness, he was blameless. This is very deed is all the righteousness a man can attain to, do what he can, in a natural state. How applicable the words of Jesus to the spirit of such men! "The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service, because they have not known the Father, nor me." (John xvi. 2, 3.) But what a change was wrought in the apostle, when the Lord Jesus met him on his way to Damascus! All he did before this may be summed up in these few words, which he records of himself in the seventh of Romans: "I was alive without the law once;" that is, before the Lord met with him on his journey to Damascus; "but when the commandment came, that is, as he says, when he fell to the earth, "sin revived, and I died." He died to all his former hopes, to his zeal to establish a righteousness of his own. Now he saw and felt all his zeal and righteousness before God to be nothing but sin, an abomination in his sight; and called himself a persecutor, a blasphemer, and injurious; and at length felt the once persecuted Saviour to be his only righteousness, his only hope. Of himself to the church at Galatia he has these memorable words: "But they had heard only, that he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me." (Gal. i. 23, 24.) What a looking-glass for professors is here, had they eyes to see, ears to

hear, or a heart to understand! But in a state of nature they have not. And what a striking commentary is the apostle's own account of himself on the truth of what he wrote to the church at Ephesus, namely, "And you hath he quickened, who were DEAD in trespasses and sins." Yes, and in this death they must have remained, either in nature's profession or profanity, without the putting forth within us of the power of that God who raiseth the dead! The apostle calls it, "the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him on his own right hand in the heavenly places." (Ephes. i. 19, 20.) What sublime and exalted views had the apostle of the power of God; and what a necessity for its exercise, in its quickening power, in the souls of those who were so spiritually dead and past all hope from any help but almighty power! And who so able to judge righteously as the apostle himself? O the mystery of the love of God, when he meets with such wretches, in the height of their rebellion, guilt, and wickedness; and instead of cutting them down at a stroke, spares them, and quickens them, and humbles them, to reveal his Son in them, to pardon and forgive, and to be their righteousness and their eternal portion! Whenever this takes place in the bosom of any poor wretch, down drop and sink for ever all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, in the heart and affections of such a one; and never, never any more can they regain that citadel. No. God in Christ alone can now satisfy such a soul, and he alone is now sufficient to be the strength of such a heart and its portion for ever. But mind, I do not say how many lets and hindrances, stumbles and falls, temptations and sins, such a poor heart may and will meet with in the wilderness, before he gets to his journey's end; but the proof will be, they have only deceived and harassed the soul; and the end eventually will be to the child of God, a more cordial hatred to every false lover, and a further proof of the rich faithfulness of Him who, "having loved his own which were in the world, loveth them to the end." (John xiii. 1.)

But we may instance further the humiliating confession of David: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psalm li. 5.) Thus David acknowledges that the first motions of nature in his very existence were sin, and his members, while in continuance they were fashioned, were shapen in iniquity. This is all our original now has to boast, let man in his ignorance and the sleep of spiritual death conceit of himself as possessing something inherently good. It is only because the Lord has let him alone, in ignorance of himself, that his mouth is not stopped. The occasion of this confession is in connexion with painful circumstances. David had been brought through many chequered scenes in life. His God had delivered him from the hands of all his enemies, established him in the kingdom; and he was now enjoying the fruits of his toil in the city of Jerusalem. How needful it is not to be high-minded, but fear! And how needful this heartfelt prayer in our most prosperous moments, "Lead us not into temptation!" To me it

appears David was beyond the fear of enemies, and uplifted in his own heart in his prosperity, in forgetfulness of the God of all his mercies; and therefore on the brink of a precipice, from which he was about to plunge headlong. In the spirit of self-dependance, self-exaltation, and carnal glory, we may imagine he had got beyond a necessitous reliance and dependance on the arm of his God; and to be got into not a little of the spirit of Nebuchadnezzar, when he exulted in the pride of his heart, and exclaimed, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" (Dan. iv. 30.) We need not run through the melancholy narrative of David's fall. Every circumstance was of a most aggravated nature. But we learn from it the hardening nature of sin in the Lord's own elect and redeemed family. What are we, and what should we be guilty of, did our God leave us to ourselves? I mourn and tremble over what my nature is, whilst meditating on the history of David, as to man's depravity and utter ruin, without constant supplies of preserving grace! The whole account, from first to last, is enough to make a man tremble, under the aggravations that accompany it; David, the man after God's own heart, did this, being for a season left to himself. But why he was so left, and suffered to commit crimes so aggravated and atrocious in their bearings, we must be silent about, these being among the secret things which belong to the Lord. May we tremble and fear, and never think ourselves secure longer than the spirit of prayer and supplication is upon us. But the thing David had done displeased the Lord. Before David came again to his right mind, God himself sent his servant Nathan with a message to him, in the parable of the ewe lamb. The natural figure, by the Spirit of God, wrought on David in such a way as to draw forth and light into a flame all the passions of David's soul, in these words, "As the Lord liveth, this man that hath done this thing shall surely die; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity." Nathan said to David, "Thou art the man;" and immediately added, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; and I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee his house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from thy house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife." (2 Sam. xii. 7—10.) How affecting the narration altogether in the remaining part of this, and the six following chapters; and in what quick succession did the awful chastisements of God follow each other in the person of David, his family, and kingdom! What could restore or secure him but the sovereign and unchanging love of God; who.

having loved his own which were in the world, loves them unto the end? (John xiii. 1.) This truth applies to all the redeemed. David's last words, and they are sweet, are as follows: "David, the son of Jesse, said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. 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." (2 Sam. xxiii. 1—5.)

Upon the whole we may truly say, Awfully indeed was David left to prove his base original! Of one thing I am sure, that had he not been loved with an everlasting love, he neither would have known the salvation of God before, nor had the joys of it restored to his soul after backslidings so aggravated; for the Lord saw the end from the beginning. But I know that the Lord can bring his people thoroughly into an acquaintance with themselves, without leaving them to actions so outwardly dishonourable to his name and their profession. So wedded are we to a legal spirit and to a righteousness of our own, that though in his great mercy he keep us from outwardly dishonouring our profession, yet by desertion and temptation, we are at times so disciplined in the school of the plague of our own hearts, that in many, many things we feel there is but a step between us and death. (1 Sam. xx. 3.) We have stroke upon stroke in the school of adversities, and are so left to fears, to darkness, and to deaths, and at times for so long a season, that when (through the sovereign grace, and love, and faithfulness of God) light, and love, and comfort return, we can, with our whole souls, as heartily confess as David, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me!" Or, with Job, "Behold, I am vile!" (Job xl. 4.) We find our solid comfort then to be, not in what we are of ourselves, but as we stand in the covenant in which David found he stood, and which was ordered in all things and sure, even in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was made sin for us, and the Lord our Righteousness." (2 Cor. v. 21; Jer. xxiii. 6.) Thus, though we be such fools, and so slow of heart to believe, yet, from soul-trouble and poverty of spirit, we are necessitated to pray and cry to God for wisdom and power, in this truth: "The just shall live by faith." (Rom. i. 17.)

But how strikingly does the discriminating nature of the grace and love of God appear, if we contrast it with the inflexible justice and holiness of his nature in reference to Saul, who was king before David! Saul, at God's command, was anointed king over Israel, but from the history given of him, he was reluctant thereto, and hid himself. The Lord pointed out his hiding place, and when he was brought forth he was made king. In process of time, the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight against Israel. Saul waited

seven days for Samuel, as he (Samuel) had appointed; but as Samuel came not at the time appointed, and the children of Israel being scattered from him, and the Philistines hard upon Saul, he forced himself, and offered a burnt offering. As soon as he had done it, Samuel came, who, upon hearing what Saul had done, said he had done foolishly, and told him, had he kept the commandment of the Lord, the Lord would have established Saul's kingdom upon Israel for ever; but as he had disobeyed, the Lord had sought him a man after his own heart, evidently implying David, as his successor.

Saul continually stumbled after this, for it was never forgiven. And we may further remark, that when he was sent against the Amalekites, his mission from the Lord by Samuel was utterly to extirpate them and their cattle with them, and to spare nothing, because of what they had done to Israel. Here again Saul failed, for he spared the chief of the things which should have been destroyed, but, as he said, to sacrifice unto the Lord. This occasioned a more severe reproof from Samuel than before, and a more explicit and heavy doom upon Saul, which the glorious majesty of God would never revoke. And in pursuing the history of Saul until his death, we find he went on from bad to worse, from one act of sin, envy, rage, and despondency to another, until he and his sons were slain, and his army scattered on Mount Gilboa. How solemn the consideration of the dealings of God towards men! What more had David done to merit the favour of God than Saul? Yet David was accepted and Saul rejected. Why? Not because David in nature was more holy than Saul, nor less guilty. No. Both in nature were spiritually DEAD in trespasses and sins, and therefore by nature on a level. To the one the Lord dealt according to his law in a way of command; this broken, he is dealt with as a transgressor; for though man has lost the power to obey, God has not lost his authority to command; and is a debtor to no man but in justice as an offender. Saul was never renewed in the spirit of his mind; he never possessed a new heart and a new spirit; in a word, a new creation. But it was otherwise with David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, notwithstanding his grievous fall; therefore the Lord forsook him not, but restored him to repentance and to his favour, and preserved him to his everlasting kingdom. But of Saul the Lord says to Israel, "I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath." (Hos. xiii. 11.) What an awful attribute of God is his sovereignty! And how awful the condition of those who, because they cannot see the reason why God should make such a distinction, rebel against him, and fight against his dispensations, and wrest his word, though his sovereignty through the Bible shines as clear as the noonday sun! And, O believer, if you and I have had the arms of our rebellion broken before him in this matter; have felt our condition under the law, and a new creation in the Son of his love, and thus know our election of God, what thanks and praise can we render unto the Lord, in that he, in his sovereignty and love, has made us differ! We, no more than others, can tell the reason why he has done so, except that so it seemed good in his sight. No

thanks to us, for we once fought against it. But real soul-poverty, as a means, with other trying dispensations, at length bowed our proud spirits to adore him in his sovereignty, willingly and thankfully to be saved in his own way; and He has given us the unction of this truth in our hearts, namely, "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." (Luke x. 20.)

I have not been able, as I intended, to finish all I had to say; one thing flowed after another freely, and I wrote as I felt liberty.

Manchester, April, 1850.

DELTA.

SORROW AND COMFORT; OR, CONFLICTS AND TRIUMPHS THE COMMON LOT OF ALL REAL BELIEVERS.

By JOHN RUSK.

"The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy."—Prov. xiv. 10.

(Continued from page 194.)

9. Another cause of real joy is, *the ever-blessed gospel of Christ*. What makes it so is, because it has been attended with power to our souls. And here is a large field to enter upon; but I must keep within some bounds. David says, "Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance; in thy name shall they rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." What a cluster of blessings in this verse! It is worth our while to enter a little into them, as the Lord may assist.

The gospel is joyful news, or glad tidings; but observe, it is only so to them that *know* the joyful sound. David here alludes to the old law, in which you have the following account: "And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou sound the trumpet of the jubilee, to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; in the day of atonement, shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land." (Lev. xxv. 8, 9.) Now, what joyful news, literally, was this for bond servants, in debt, &c.! But let us take it up in a spiritual sense, and you will find the sound of the trumpet has a higher meaning; for it is nothing short of the power of the Holy Ghost setting a poor soul at full liberty, after all his hard bondage, and though deeply in debt and under dreadful fear of the wrath of God. "And the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrows shall go forth as the lightning; and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south." (Zech. ix. 14.)

Now, all this took place on the day of Pentecost. Take notice: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come." I would take notice of the word "fully" here; for there is a cause for its being so

expressed, or it would have been said, When the day of Pentecost was come. ' But it says "fully come." The disciples, no doubt, had found many happy days in conversing with their Lord; but the day of Pentecost was not fully come. That was a blessed time which Peter, James, and John had when on the mount, and Christ was transfigured before them; yet the day of Pentecost was not fully come. And I might go on. Just so is it with us. We have often sweet and blessed lifts in our souls—much enlargement, yet not fully delivered; so that we should not conclude that we are or have been fully delivered too soon. I know this has been the case, and such have wondered when they have gone back into all their trouble again. Do not forget "fully come."

Well, "They were all with one accord in one place, and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting; and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost," &c. (Acts ii. 1—4.) This sound you have mentioned in Psalm xix., which Paul takes up in writing to the Romans: "Have they not all heard? yea, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." (Rom. x. 18.) For they went forth and wrought, and the Lord wrought with them, confirming the word with signs following.

Now, the thing with you and me is this: Has the sound reached our hearts? If so, Christ's commission has reached us, "to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to give beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Now, is not the gospel in the power of it a joyful sound to all such? For see what a blessed exchange they make. The heart is bound up with God's love shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost. This is "the sound."

Again, here is liberty to captives held fast by Satan, slaves to him. "Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive be delivered," &c.? Yes, when the sound reaches the heart.

Again, "opening the prison." That is the sound also of the blood of Christ reaching the conscience: "By the blood of the covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit," &c.

Then there is real beauty: the new man put on, and the old man quite hid.

The "oil of joy;" that is something more than joy, it is the spirit of joy; and all mourning ceases.

The "garment of praise;" that is, every faculty of the soul praises the Lord. As a garment covers all over, so the soul is filled with praise. This is the joyful sound.

But again, David tells us of five things that such are sure to enjoy.

First, "They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." You and I, before delivered, may have a glimpse of this, as the disciples had going to Emmaus; but it was short. How different, then, is it to walk in the light of his countenance

Secondly, "In thy name shall they rejoice all the day," that is, in the covenant name which God proclaimed to Moses: "Gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin." Now, such are rejoicing in this name all the day; not hoping for it, but rejoicing that they have it. They know the joyful sound. It echoes through their hearts!

"Salvation, O the joyful sound!"

Thirdly, "In thy righteousness shall they be exalted." They are exalted far above all condemnation from the law, above all their doubts and fears, and above every enemy which they have; above all empty professors, and above the fear of death; for "righteousness delivereth from death."

Fourthly, The Lord is the glory of their strength. No other characters than those who know the joyful sound ever did or will give God the whole glory of their strength; no, not even God's family. And as it respects the Lord's family, it is evident that until they are completely stripped, their own strength is not gone; for if it were, then the Lord would appear, and they shall know this sound when he does. But if a man hold fast, in whole or in part, his own strength, how can God be the glory of it? This is very clear to me. The way in which this is done is by a continual discovery of our utter weakness; so that, when the Lord appears, we are astonished at the power put forth in such poor crawling worms as we are: "My strength is made perfect in weakness." And if you and I are called upon to contend for God's truth, the weaker, more foolish and of no account in ourselves, the better; and by crying secretly to the Lord, we shall find his strength when we most need it. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength, to perfect praise, to still the enemy and the avenger." I have found this true many a time. But when I have trusted to any stock of my own, I have been overcome.

Lastly, "In thy favour our horn shall be exalted." God's favour is his love, his grace, for it is all one. And this favour is felt in the heart, so that we feel strong; for what can be more precious than to believe that we are in favour with God? If you (literally speaking) were sure that you were in the king's favour, it certainly would exalt your horn, (or power,) and you would do many things. And so it is with us. All our exaltation is by virtue of our union with him. Do not forget that little word *in*. To be *in* his favour is wonderful, because it is everlasting. Thus you see what joy and rejoicing arises from knowing the joyful sound.

10. Another cause of this real joy, or what it springs from, is felt *every time we are enabled to believe that God has begun this good work in our hearts*. The holy and ever blessed God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—begins, carries on, and completes this good work in all the elect. Paul says, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sin;" which work of quickening is the joint operation of the Holy Trinity. "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and

quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will;" and, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." Without this quickening what are all our pretensions to religion? Why, nothing at all. You have this set forth in Ezekiel xvi., where it speaks of the Lord passing by the church when cast out in the open field in her blood, and saying unto her, Live. After this, we are told that he washes her, and clothes and ornaments her, so that she is beautiful and comely, through the comeliness which he puts upon her. You have it set forth also in chapter xxxvi. 24 to the end; also in chapter xxxvii. You also have an account of the prophet being commanded to prophesy to the dry bones. And what is very particular, there was first a noise, then a shaking, then bone came to his bone, then sinews, and flesh, and skin; and yet there was no breath in them. You see how far people may go, and yet not have spiritual and divine life. After this he is commanded to prophesy to the wind, and then life entered into them, &c. (Ezek. xxxvii. 1—10.) And this one thing, life, takes in all God's work, from first to last, in all its bearings, let it be whatever it may. I will mention a few things in order to illustrate it.

First, *Faith*. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Well, "he that believeth hath everlasting life."

Secondly, *Love* "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us." And God circumcises our hearts to love him, that we may live. (Deut. xxx. 6.)

Thirdly, A *good hope*: "Christ in us the hope of glory;" and Peter calls this a "lively hope." Every grace of the Spirit in our hearts, whether pardon, righteousness, salvation, &c., is called the grace of life; all the promise that is contained in that good work is the promise of life, and so are all the blessings of the covenant, and the covenant itself. "As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore;" and "My covenant was with Levi of life and peace."

It takes in *regeneration* and *renewing*, which is sprinkling the water of life upon us that we may be clean. It takes in *our feeding upon Christ* as a sacrifice also: "He that eateth me, even he shall live by me."

And thus, in a brief way, you may see that the whole of God's work lies in life, and it was the sum and substance of all Christ's ministry, and every branch of that gospel which his servants are sent to declare. Hence the angel of the Lord, after bringing the apostles out of prison, said to them, "Go, stand and speak in the temple all the words of this life." (Acts v. 20.)

Now, although these things are clearly set forth, yet you and I cannot make them out so easily in our experience. O no. Yet every now and then, when the Lord shines, all appears to be very clear. This long labour and travail is called "working out our own salvation with fear and trembling;" and yet, at that very time that we are fearing and trembling, God is "working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure;" and has declared that to "this man he will look, and with him he will dwell, that is of an humble and contrite spirit, and

that trembles at his word, to revive the spirit of the humble and the heart of the contrite ones; for he will not contend for ever," &c.; and it is called "making our calling and election sure;" not sure in the purpose of God, but sure in that we have the same experience as Bible saints: "Go thy way by the footsteps of the flock," &c.

Again, what makes it so very hard to make it out God's work in us is this: there are many people that appear to us both to profess and preach the same things, and after all such are not taught of God, but are deceivers; so that we have much to cope with. Yet the Lord will in his own time make all plain. And so David found it. Hence he says, "For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work; I will triumph in the works of thine hands." (Ps. xcii. 4.) O how valuable is this after a long desertion!

Again, the prophet Isaiah gives a beautiful account of God's work in the hearts of his people, both the soul-travail and the deliverance. But mind what he says: "And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb; and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies." (Isaiah lxvi. 14.) Here the heart rejoices on account of God's work; but then it is when we see this, for we do not always see it; it is only when he is pleased to shine: "In thy light we see light."

Again, Paul says, "Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another." (Gal. vi. 4.) The work here spoken of is the work of faith in us, which is God's work in us from first to last; and this you may gather from the same apostle, who when writing to the church at Corinth says, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Christ Jesus is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

Observe how he brings the proving in both texts. Faith, as I said, is God's work: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom God hath sent." Yes, and a very great work it is too; for it is called "the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power;" and it is also called the arm of the Lord made bare: "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" (Isa. liii. 1.) Also God's free gift to his own people, and none else, and therefore called "the faith of God's elect;" "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." (Ephes. ii. 8.) All these texts prove it is God's work.

Now, to examine ourselves, is to pray to the Lord to enable us to come to the light, and expose conscience to the force of truth; and if this is in heart followed up, God will make all clear, because he has promised to make darkness light, and crooked things straight.

It is also to search the Scriptures, praying to the Holy Spirit to enlighten us so that we may see that God's work in us is genuine; "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto, according to thy word."

Also hearing those preachers who, we are persuaded, have experienced God's work in themselves: "Faith cometh by hearing."

And lastly, uniting with such as are well taught, that know the plague of their own hearts, and the Lord's coming and going. "They that walk with wise men shall be wise;" and, as I said before, this is going by the footsteps of the flock, which steps are the faith of our father Abraham. Thus you will see what joy will attend a discovery of God's work in our hearts.

(To be continued.)

A SHORT DISCOURSE ON SANCTIFICATION.

BY MR. HUNTINGTON.

"Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth."—JOHN xvii. 17.

To sanctify is to appoint, ordain, consecrate, or set apart any person or thing to a holy and special use; and thus God sanctified the Sabbath day, the tabernacle, its furniture, and all the vessels of the ministry. (Gen. ii. 3; Exod. xl. 9—11.) These things were not only to be set apart by the appointment of God to be used in his service, but they were to be sprinkled with blood and anointed with oil. To sanctify, in one sense of the word, signifies to wash, cleanse, or purify. The priests were sanctified by washing in water, and with the anointing oil; and by blood upon the right ear, the thumb of the right hand, and the great toe of the right foot; the common people by washing their flesh, clothes, &c. &c.; and others by the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer, or sprinkling the unclean, which sanctified to the purifying of the flesh. (Heb. ix. 13.) But it is the substance of this shadow that I aim at, which sanctifies wholly body, soul, and spirit.

"Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth."

I. The elect of God were sanctified *in the purpose of God* from everlasting; and in this purpose of grace Christ was made sanctification and redemption to them from all eternity. "From everlasting I was set up." (Prov. viii. 23.) And in his undertakings for us "he went forth from of old, yea, from everlasting." (Micah v. 2.) In this sense we are said to be "sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called." (Jude 1.) God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; and this is his will of purpose, which in time, when he began to speak to men, became the will of promise, and in the fulness of time it became the good-will of God in Christ Jesus; that is, at Christ's appearing, who came to execute every branch of the Father's goodwill and pleasure, and to be manifested to us as our Sanctification, according to the ancient settlements or counsels of old. "Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God; by the which will we are sanctified." (Heb. x. 7, 10.) This branch of sanctification, being in the purpose and goodwill of God, must undoubtedly signify setting

apart and appointing us to it; and, as it was settled and done in the purpose of God, it is spoken of in the past tense: "Sanctified by God the Father from everlasting, preserved in Christ Jesus" in time, from the womb to conversion, and called in due time to the fellowship of the Lord Jesus; for, being chosen in Christ from eternity, we are preserved in him throughout our state of nature, as his own remnant. "Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb: and even to your old age, I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you. I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." (Isa. xlv. 3, 4.)

II. We are sanctified *by the blood of Christ*, which has appeased the offended majesty of heaven; which blotted out our transgressions as a cloud from the book of God's remembrance; which satisfied justice, removed the curse, purged our consciences, and procured our enlargement from the prison. "By the blood of the covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." (Zech. ix. 11.) "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." (Heb. xiii. 12.)

III. We are sanctified *by the Spirit of God*, who reveals God's secret purposes of grace to us, and applies the great atonement to the conscience; and who, by his powerful operations, regenerates and renews us, which is called "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Under these operations the soul is cleansed, renewed, and the faculties of the soul are turned to God; the will submits and chooses the better part; the heart relents, and repents towards God, and becomes soft, broken, and contrite; the mind begins to be heavenly, and to mind heavenly things. Such have life and peace; the affections go after God and are placed above, and the conscience acts an honest and just part for God. "That the offering up of the Gentiles might be accepted, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." (Rom. xv. 16.)

Thus it may be seen that each Person in the Godhead has a hand in the sanctification of his people. We "are sanctified by God the Father" in his purpose; Christ sanctified us by his own blood when he suffered without the gate; and we are made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

Moreover, we may see that the word sanctification, both in the Old Testament and in the New, signifies something more than setting apart; in this sense we were sanctified in the purpose of God. But we read of purging our sins, and of purging the conscience, of purifying the heart; of sanctifying and cleansing the church, with "the washing of water by the word," (Ephes. v. 26;) and of the washing of regeneration, &c.; and of "cleansing us from all our filthiness, and from all our idols." Now this sanctification reaches to body, soul, and spirit. The body is sanctified by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost; the body is his temple, and he is the Lord that sanc-

tifies us. The soul is sanctified as above described; and even the animal spirits are often high and much elated in the service of God, when the powerful operations of God are upon the believer; much more so than a fainting, wearied man is inebriated and made merry with the most generous wine.

Furthermore, to cleave close to Christ in love, and abide in him; to walk with God in filial fear, and with a good conscience; to serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter; to follow peace with all them that call upon God out of a pure heart; to shun the works of darkness, and abide in the truth; and to persevere in faith, is possessing the vessel in sanctification and honour.

“Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth.” This word of truth is not the old law, though that was true. No, nor yet the prophecies of the Old Testament, though they are the “more sure word of prophecy,” and are all infallibly true and cannot be broken. But then Christ is the Truth of all the legal types, and he is the substance of all the prophecies; for “to him gave all the prophets witness,” and of him they all prophesied. He is the end of the law for righteousness, and the substance of all the prophecies for life and salvation; and therefore he magnified the one and sealed the other: “He magnified the law and made it honourable; and he fulfilled and sealed up all vision and prophecy.” (Dan. ix. 24.) Moses the law-giver, and Elijah the prophet, both resigned their offices to Jesus on the mount. (Matt. xvii. 3.) And hence it is said, “The law and the prophets were until John.” (Luke xvi. 16.) Before Christ came, the law, both moral and ceremonial, was in full force; and the prophecies respecting Christ lay open; unaccomplished, and unfulfilled. But when Christ came he abolished the one and fulfilled and sealed up the other; and now we must look for all truth cleared, fulfilled, and fulfilling in Christ; for “grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” And, as he is the Substance of all the ceremonial shadows, the Truth of all the legal types, the true light of all vision, and the subject and subject-matter of all predictions or prophecies, he styles himself “the Way, the Truth, and the Life.”

The “truth,” therefore, mentioned in my text, through which we are sanctified, is without all doubt the absolute and unconditional “promises of God, which in Christ are yea, and in him amen; unto the glory of God by us;” to the glory of God’s grace by the eternal salvation of us.

I have shown that we are sanctified by the election of God, by the blood of Christ, by the Holy Ghost, and by the continual communications of grace; and as we are to be sanctified through the truth, (“thy word is truth,”) we must look for some true word of promise, where this sanctification is held forth and promised to us; and, let them be where they may, they are all now in Christ.

And first, “I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.” “Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.” (Isa. xli. 9; lxxv. 22.) Here is his choice of us, in which decree we were sanctified.

"I will cleanse their blood which I have not cleansed." "So shall he sprinkle many nations." "From all your filthiness will I cleanse you." And, "By the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit." Here are the promises of sanctification by the blood of Christ.

"I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." "I will pour out my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessings upon thine offspring." Here is the promise of sanctification by the Holy Ghost.

"This people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise." "I will direct their work in truth." "I will give them one heart and one way." "I will keep them." "I will water them, and put my fear in their heart, and they shall not depart from me." Here is the sanctification and honour that shall be upon every chosen vessel.

Now, Holy Father, as thou hast promised thus to sanctify them, and hast made me sanctification to them, and hast promised that they shall be sanctified through me; and as thy choice of them is in me, and the blood I am going to shed is for them, and the fulness of the Spirit that is upon me is to flow to them from me; and as all the fulness of grace is in me for them, then sanctify them according to thy true and faithful word of promise, for "thy word is truth."

"Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." Wherever thy word is preached by those who are chosen in me, and appointed to preach, who declare thy whole counsels; who are pardoned by me, and preach pardon; who are born again, and are ministers of the Spirit; who are partakers of grace and good stewards of it; let the knowledge of thine election of them, the atonement that I have made for them, the Spirit that thou hast promised to them, and the abundant grace given them in me, ever accompany the word of truth preached, and be communicated to all the appointed heirs of it, who receive the word with power and in the love of it: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth."

And every believer that is called under the ministry of the word, or by the operation of the Spirit without the word preached, which is promised in the word and comes according to it, is a living witness of his truth. By these means they make their calling and election sure; receive pardon and peace by faith in the blood of Christ, which faith mostly comes by hearing; they receive the Spirit by the hearing of faith; and find the good work of grace begun and carried on under it, which is a full answer to this prayer: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth."

And in this way the disciples were sanctified under the personal ministry of the dear Redeemer. "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you; abide in me." (John xv. 3, 4.) What word was this? He told them of his Father's election of them. "Rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

He had told them that he "laid down his life a ransom for many," and that "his blood was drink indeed." He promised to send them the Spirit, the promise of the Father; and a measure of the Spirit was

upon them, though they knew not what manner of spirit they were of. And virtue had gone out of him to them all; the grace of life was in them; and by faith they had passed from death unto life, and had everlasting life. And thus God's promised sanctification attended the word of the Saviour to all that heard the word and kept it; they were sanctified through the truth, and clean through the word that the Lord had spoken unto them. This is the sanctification of the Lord's people, and it is all of God. "I am the Lord that sanctify you."

The prophecies and promises of the Old Testament respecting Christ were two branches; the one was what he should do and suffer, the other branch was the glory that should follow his sufferings. The former were all fulfilled by him, and then all the other became "yea, and amen" in him; and all the promised blessings, and all the glory that should follow, are in him also. Hence he is made sanctification to us in all its branches: he is the first above, and our election is in him; our sanctification by blood is of him, who is the fountain opened for sin; our sanctification by the Spirit is the same, for the Spirit with all its fulness is in him; he sends the promise of the Father upon us, and all the communications of grace to us are out of his fulness; our sanctification is complete in him, and we are sanctified by a believing, cordial reception of him into our hearts; and our life of sanctification in this world stands in our walking in him, cleaving to him, and holding communion and fellowship with him; for "he is made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

EXTRACT.

The Rock that accompanied the church in the wilderness, the apostle declares, was Christ; and he styles Jesus "the spiritual Rock." (1 Cor. x. 4.) Twenty times, at least, David, by the power of the Holy Ghost, calls Jehovah his Rock, or to that effect. Now, whatever is proper to the Father, is to the Son; and whatever glory we give to the Father, we give the Son also, he being a Person in the incomprehensible essence. All men are to honour the Son, *even* as they honour the Father. The underived Deity, the essential divinity, and the mediatorial glories of our Jesus, form a body of light in the Scriptures of truth, and in the church of God, which all the sophistry of the most learned Arians, Socinians, and Sabellians, never could extinguish, nor ever will be able. If Jesus were not God, I should have sunk under many a difficulty; and if he were not "bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh," I should tremble at the thought of approaching him. When darkness and trouble come on, my prayer is directed to him who is able to save, being the mighty God. He hears and delivers me; and he who is thus taught, carries a proof in his own bosom of Jesus' power and Godhead. "This God is our God for ever and ever; and he will be our guide even unto death."
—H. Fowler.

THE LORD KNOWN BY HIS JUDGMENT.

(Concluded from page 200.)

Now, patience is tried in this waiting work by many things; and then, again, we are "strengthened to all patience," (Col. i. 11,) by the sovereign hand of our most gracious God.

(1.) *Carefulness, anxiety, and concern* try patience. These come from the weakness of faith, but are sore plagues to patience. Our blessed Lord said we should "take no thought for the morrow, but let the morrow take thought for itself; (Matt. vi. 34;) and the apostle tells us to "be careful for nothing; (Phil. iv. 6;) and says he would have us "without carefulness." (1 Cor. vii. 32.) His meaning is, that we should not be carefully and anxiously concerned about anything, seeing that God has all things in his hands, and will make everything "work together for good." (Rom. viii. 28.) He himself had risen to this great experience, and could say, "I have learned that in what state soever I am, therewith to be content;" (Phil. iv. 11;) and therefore anxiety, concern, and carefulness, only doubted of God's good pleasure in bring his soul out of every trouble.

But it is the case that we are such poor stumbling weaklings, that we are ever (or at least often) anxious, careful, and concerned about this, that, or the other, wondering whether the Lord will do this, anxiously concerned whether he will perform that, when all the while he hath pledged himself with an oath to fulfil every promise. When such feelings work in our breast, we get impatient and fretful; and, instead of patience having her perfect work and we sitting patiently waiting the Lord's own time, fretfulness and impatience arise, patience hides her face, and the soul is left in havoc among these foes of his own household.

When here, the soul, if rightly led, will plead with the Lord for patience to wait his will with; he will call him the "God of patience;" (Rom. xv. 5,) because he feels he is so; and he will tell the Lord that he cannot exercise one grain of this precious grace himself, and therefore asks him in his free grace and mercy to bestow it upon him: "O Lord, exercise thy own grace in my heart; give me patience to wait thy blessed will with; glorify thyself in the exercise of thy own grace, and so make thy kingdom to prosper with me, blessed God," will be his prayer. And in this way will he day by day plead, till the Lord will give the blessing; then will he say, "I wait for the Lord; my soul doth wait, and in his word (of promise) do I hope." (Ps. cxxx. 5.) And I have known what it is, to be more earnest with the Lord to exercise this grace in my heart, when under trial, than to deliver me from the trial itself; and that this is the right turn I doubt not. (Matt. vi. 33.)

(2.) *The least losing sight of the promise* tries patience. All the while faith keeps her eye firmly fixed upon the promise, patience is more likely to keep her heart up, for hope will cheer her on; but when the eye of faith at all swerves from this, and in the least looks to circumstances and appearances, then patience will lose her strength. We are exhorted as follows: "Let thine eyes (of faith) look right on;

(to the promise,) and thine eyelids straight before thee, (to the fulfilment of it.) Turn not to the right hand nor to the left, (of appearances.)" (Prov. iv. 25, 27.) And all the while this is the case patience may rest pretty quiet; but when the eye fails to look right on, or there is the least turning to the right hand or to the left, impatience will be sure to arise; and all this put together will sorely try patience.

And yet, notwithstanding, he will be desiring to have patience in lively exercise. He wishes to be patiently waiting for the Lord, and pleads to be "strengthened unto all patience;" which plea the Lord will in his own time answer, patience will arise in the heart, and he will "quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." And he that does observe these things will learn somewhat of the sovereignty of the Lord, in the thus exercising of this precious grace. I will now notice briefly the next grace I proposed, viz,

Fourthly, *Submission*. True submission is bowing to the will of God in heart and affection, especially when that will runs contrary to our will and desires; it is bowing to every dispensation of his towards us in providence or grace, receiving it at his hand, and begging of him to make it of profit to our souls. It is, in effect, saying from our inmost soul, "Thy will be done," however that may cross our own carnal will or fleshly desire.

Submission is a waiting grace, inasmuch as it lies as much in submitting to the Lord's time as to his way. It is therefore closely allied to patience, and cannot be said to be truly in exercise where patience is not. It can lie, and live, and breathe under the heaviest load, if called forth; but according as the load gets heavier, so accordingly must submission be strengthened by the almighty hand of God, or the strength of it not being equal to the trial, rebellion in some shape or other will break forth. No man can exercise this grace in the least of himself; it is the sovereign work of God, and his alone, to exercise this grace in any soul. This the children of God are taught to know, by the judgment the Lord executes in them respecting this grace.

(1.) *By calling it forth*. The soul, under a heavy load, may be plunging like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, till the Lord turns it into the right channel of submission to his will. Softness, humbleness, sweetness, and blissful assimilation to his gracious will is the precious result; and the soul is led to trace it all to the sovereign work of God.

(2.) *By withholding it*. The soul having had this sweet grace in exercise, and by some means or other (which I shall not here notice) having lost it, will be, if led aright, desiring and pleading for a reviving of this grace and its precious influences. But the Lord may see fit to withhold it for a time, and so let the soul know the worth of it, and whence it comes. Here the soul will learn, even more perfectly than by possessing it, that it is one of the sovereign acts of the Most High God; and will see that is included here: "Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James i. 16.)

(3.) *By feeling the opposite.* When fretfulness, peevishness, murmuring, repining, and rebellion are at work, the soul feels that these are the natural workings of the flesh, and that it is itself utterly helpless to extirpate, or even moderate them, and work submission in the heart. This also teaches the soul that submission is the work of God, and leads it to plead and plead, again and again, with the Lord for the lively exercise thereof. Here the soul learns the same lesson, and traces this grace to the great fountain of it all, even God. For if rebellion, &c., are the work of nature, and she is not divided against herself, then submission must be the work of a supernatural influence, as it really is.

(4.) The *effects* that either submission or the want of it produces on the soul, teach us that it is the work of God. All that leads to God, is from God; all that leads from God, is from nature, sin, and death. Submission, the soul will find, leads him not only to God, but even to "glorify the Lord in the fires;" (Isa. xxiv. 15;) while rebellion drives the soul from the Lord, for "the rebellious dwell in a dry land;" (Ps. lxxviii. 6;) and the Lord will not be this to his people: "O generation, see ye the word of the Lord, Have I been a wilderness unto Israel, a land of darkness," &c.? (Jer. ii. 31.) But I must proceed; and come to the last grace which I promised to notice, namely,

Fifthly, *Prayer.* This grace bespeaks a lively state of soul; the want of it a dead state. Mr. H^{art} was perfectly right when he said,

"Only while we pray we live."

And I will venture to put his words into another form, when they will be quite as true, though not more so:

"Only while we live we pray."

Life in the soul touching the exercise of it, is the omnipotent work of God, and of him only; just as much as the first work of it, in translating us from darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son. Hence David said, "Thou hast brought up my soul from the grave; (here is the first quickening;) thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit." (Ps. xxx. 3.) We see here that he acknowledges the same power to have kept him alive as that which brought him up from the grave, which is really the case.

This being so, prayer is, as it were, the breath of life, and is the work of him only whose prerogative it is to communicate life in the soul. "Quicken us," says the psalmist, "and we will call upon thy name."

Now, it is not my purpose here to show what true prayer is altogether; nor yet to show that all the three Persons in the Deity are the Objects of prayer, which is really the case. I might enlarge my sheets to a great extent were I to launch out into any of these or other points, which suggest themselves under this head. But I will content myself by showing how a child of God learns somewhat of the sovereignty of the Lord by the exercise of this grace, and then briefly draw these papers to a conclusion.

(1.) *By proving that he cannot stir up himself to prayer.* An honest soul will own that many, many times, when in his inmost soul he would be most happy to go to the Lord, and order his cause before him, and fill his mouth with arguments, that he cannot find the spirit to do it. "We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes; we stumble at noonday as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men." (Isa. lix. 10.) This was the case with Job: "O. that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat. I would order my cause before him and fill my mouth with arguments. Behold! I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him. He hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him." (Job xxiii. 3, 4, 8, 9.) In this experience, a child of God will learn that the spirit of grace and supplication, in every exercise thereof, is the special work and sovereign grace of the Lord God Almighty.

(2.) *By feeling the spirit of grace and supplication bubble up in my heart, even when not thinking of it.* Sometimes this sovereign grace is manifested to be so when the mind is busy about other things. The blessed Spirit descends into the heart with sweet enlivening influence, and draws the affections out towards the Lord by prayer. I have known some of my sweetest times with the Lord to be in this way; while, at other times, I have tried, and tried, and tried again to muster up this blessed Spirit's sweet influences, but all in vain; my thoughts have wandered like the fool's eye to the ends of the earth, and I could not "pour out a prayer" (Isa. xxvi. 16) with all my exertions. All was vain. I speak not thus, however, to encourage carelessness in the means; but only to show how the soul proves that prayer is "the gift of God," and sees the Lord to be a Sovereign in the exercise of his own grace.

Thus have I gone through the five graces which I purposed doing, namely, 1. faith; 2. hope; 3. patience; 4. submission; 5. prayer; and have shown, in a measure, from my own heart and the word of God, how the soul proves the sovereignty of the Lord in the exercise of them. I have, therefore, finished two out of the three leading points under this head:

I. That the Lord proves himself a Sovereign by the judgment which he executeth in *bringing us into trouble*; and

II. That he proves himself a Sovereign *in the exercise of his grace in trouble.*

I will now briefly hint at the next leading point, and then conclude, namely,

III. That the Lord proves himself a Sovereign *in bringing us out of trouble.* And this he does in two particulars:

1. In respect of *manner.* When a soul has been brought into a "great and sore trouble," and has received a promise that he shall be delivered out of it, it is almost always the case that it will begin to chalk out the way for the Lord to fulfil his own promise. But he shall prove the Lord a Sovereign here, as well as at other times in

his experience; for the Lord has his own way of fulfilling his word, and his way is often strange to us.

“God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.”

It may not be our way, but it shall be his; and, as he is “excellent in working,” (Isa. xxviii. 29,) it would be well for us to leave it all to him, being assured that he will do that which is the best for us in the end.

2. In respect to *time*. “The times and the seasons the Father hath reserved unto himself;” and it is not for us to know them. Jesus has left these words upon record: “My time is not yet come, but your time is alway ready.” (John vii. 6.) When in trouble, though under a promise of being delivered, we are apt to get fretful and impatient; and at other times hope spurs us on to expect deliverance now and then, according to appearances and circumstances. The soul often thinks, “Surely the Lord will deliver me at such a time, at such an event, and so on; but no, there is “a set time to favour Zion,” (Ps. cii. 13,) and the soul shall be brought to say, “My times are in thy hand:” knowing that the Lord knows the best *times* as well as the best *way* of delivering his people.

God bless his own truth, for his own name's sake! Amen.

H—.

O.

MEEKNESS.

Meekness signifies a quiet, teachable, and melted frame of mind. It has many peculiar promises annexed to it; and as it is one of the most amiable, so it is one of the most profitable of the spiritual graces. I say spiritual; for the mildness, the tears, submission, and teachableness of a natural man are in Adam the first, and therefore quite another thing altogether from that spiritual and blessed fruit called meekness, one of the fruits of righteousness acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, in the quickened elect.

And O, my soul, may thou be enabled to lift up thy feelings to Christ's Father, that chose thee in and brought thee to his Son; to Christ's Spirit that quickens thee, and to the Beloved Son of God, thy All-in-All, who enables thee to bring forth this amiable and sweet grace called meekness. How different from the rough, and crabbed, and sour nature of a natural man! In my earlier days I have known how passionate and enraged I have been, as human nature is naturally. Revenge I never was much capable of. As one of the heathen said, “Not ignorant of calamities,” I have dropped thereby into an incapacity for being violent or unkind to others. I pity the man who has never had affliction. Man, being like the wild ass's colt, if the bit has not gagged, fretted, and turned him into the paths of grief, see what a headstrong, giddy, and unmanageable creature we have got. O sacred sorrow! that compels natural men in some

degree to see that this world is a blighted scene, under the displeasure of an angry God against Adam and his seed for sin! O sacred sorrow (one of the component parts of meekness)! that as it dwelt in Jesus, meek, and lowly, and gentle; yea, in that Man of rugged and unexampled sorrows and acquaintanceship with grief; so the self-same sorrow spiritual, and which no natural man knows anything about, teaches every elect person, through the Spirit of grace, to copy and walk in the steps of that Great Exemplar!

Meekness is the third blessing in the Sermon on the Mount. It is to accompany the engrafted word, which is to save our souls. I have been struck with this also: "Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." (Zeph. ii. 3.) See here, as if this meekness were one thing as a spiritual grace springing from Jesus, which would screen, through grace, from some or many calamities which might come on other saints from their still unmortified relics of the old Adam.

It is a beautiful grace; and is a close copy in part of the sweet character of Christ. And in the general is as contrary to the natural man as to teach a hog to admire diamonds, rather than have his swill of brewers' grains, as Luther partly says. It is amazing, if you look into the corruption of human nature. I have endeavoured through the Spirit to look narrowly into my first Adam nature, and to endeavour to gauge it with accuracy and honesty; and am well contented to set it down at this awful figure:—"earthly, sensual, devilish." But here comes in meekness, if we are engrafted into Him who is meek and lowly in heart. And I observe, that meekness has the promise to "inherit the earth." And what is it? Why this. When poverty of spirit and mourning (the two first blessings in the Sermon on the Mount) have done their offices; when the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning have, as a preparatory work, brought the kingdom of heaven and comfort, as the ending and completeness of spiritual poverty and of chafed grief, lo! then meekness comes in, thirdly, with the promise of inheriting the earth.

I said at the commencement, that meekness is a teachable, melted, and quiet frame of spirit Godward. After being plunged in the depths of poverty and of grief; after being robbed by the spirit of burning of all our first Adam (fancied, and only fancied) greatness and self-satisfaction; after the violent inroads by the spirit of burning, made upon us to rob us and spoil us, to bring us wrecked from pride and ease, then comes meekness. How amazing the work, to produce poverty of spirit and mourning! What a devilish spirit is man! See him with his arms folded, wishing to say, like Nebuchadnezzar's spirit, I am second to none. But the great God testified against this Nebuchadnezzar's spirit, by making him poor and a mourner. I have marvelled by observing the difficulty of producing poverty of spirit and mourning, and thirdly, meekness. Yes, and do to this day, and shall till breath is out of my body. Compared to these never-withering beauties effected in the regenerated soul day by day, victories over self, victories over all the damnable materials of

our first Adam nature; surely the glories, the most highly admired attainments of mere morality, however highly carried, are mere weeds to be trodden under foot. "Nature has all its glories lost."

"But few among the carnal wise
Obtain the favour of thine eyes,
Almighty King of grace."

We are naturally ambitious, on good terms with ourselves, have self-admiration; and have naturally the tinctures of infernal pride on us all; at least, I am sure I have. Now, when God burns poverty of spirit, mourning, and meekness, (those three first inestimable blessings of the Christian covenant) into us, he makes us stand back as it were from ourselves. Bruised by violence, and soothed by undeserved, unmerited salvation, we are as it were at once stunned and delighted; stunned with the ruins of our devilish nature; secondly, delighted with the adorable approaches of the kingdom of heaven, of being comforted, and of the inheritance of the earth as our own. I have heard and read much of meekness, but I think (I never heard or read of it from others) that the Lord putting it the third in the Sermon on the Mount is, in some degree, an infallible key or hint whereby we may, under the Spirit's teaching, fathom what this mysterious property called meekness *really* is. And I cannot but think and say, that as concerning other things in religion, so concerning meekness, there may be much noise and talk, but little realization. It is one thing to say, it is another to do. "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only." What is the use of my writing this, if my heart is not in experimental possession of this grace called meekness? Alas! it is out of the jaws of the lion, it is out of the fire, it is out of the most dangerous and awful scenes that this grace, meekness, is plucked by the spiritual traveller. It is in being brought up out of the land of Egypt, in being led through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and pits, through a land of drought and of the shadow of death, through a land that no (unquickened) man passed through, and where no (mere mortal) man (having not the Spirit of Christ ever) dwelt." (Jer. ii.) I have learnt these things slowly, and am a learner still. Like the children of Israel, I have to retrace many things. I find I am both vile and abominable. Like clay to the seal, I am always repenting, receiving some new impression, as concerning my fall in Adam, so concerning my restoration in Christ; the latter more difficult to feel than the former. Happy is the man engaged in these solemn and soul-profitable pursuits!

I consider meekness in its character as *teachable*, as being a living transcript and fulfilment of the written word, through the Spirit's teachings in the quickened soul. "There goes a walking, living, breathing Bible," may be said of any one fully grown in meekness. Whatever Christ has said is, by the Spirit, realized in the meek. "The meek will he guide in judgment: the meek will he teach his way." (Psalm xxv.) O happy is the man whom the Spirit is making "an epistle read and known of all men!" A knowledge of the law and the gospel in their inward work and effects in the soul.

this knows a meek man. Softened by the anger and love of God, lo, how a meek man, Christ-like, and like the sun-flower, comes to and walks and stays in the light, which is God himself. "God is light." Meekness, through the Spirit, has closed in with Christ; has been so disposed and enabled to do. "If ye love me, keep my commandments," in a gospel sense. First, the soul through the law has been stricken dead to the law of works; secondly, quickened together with Christ through the promise, Christ being made spirit and life, that is, life, righteousness, and holiness imputed, the Spirit shed on the soul so gifted with the imputation of Christ; and thirdly, the effects. This is a scriptural religion when felt. O the sweet graces, that run as from a heavenly reservoir, wherever these things are honestly felt! O the sweet dews, the heavenly beams felt, where this sun and these springs of moisture soothe the parched traveller, and cheer the self-despairing beggar and mourner in spiritual Zion! O how far off a natural man is from these things! Ignorant of himself, ignorant of Christ, ignorant of gospel holiness, a natural man may well be said by the psalmist to be like the beasts that perish! Beastly, base, destitute of any Christ-like qualities, a natural man inherits not the earth. Ignorant of his Creator as revealed in Christ, Isaiah tells us that man, so far as unacquainted supernaturally with the meek and lowly Jesus, and so far as not transformed into the same image by spiritual and effectual power, man is worse than the ox or the ass. (Isa. i.) But a meek man inherits the earth. No unpardoned guilt, no unappeased wrath; effectual repentance, humble confession; spiritual carefulness that we may not displease Christ in thought, word, or deed; a hearty reception of Christ as our complete salvation by imputation without any works whatsoever; glorying in it, feeling the unutterable sweetness of it; singing with inward melody of heart; the Spirit bearing witness with our spirit; the pleasantness arising therefrom; surrendering ourselves as clay for our reconciled Potter to do with us as he sees fit; distrust of our own wisdom; feeling the constraining power of Christ's love; hating ourselves with indignation, revenge, and in some degree genuine hatred for all our shortcomings and sins; —meekness in receiving the engrafted word, will have a touch of all these. Yes; and if we are to desire, as Epaphras, to stand complete in *all* the will of God, there is nought in the Scriptures but what meekness in the Spirit's power will attend to. "By the words of thy mouth I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." And is not this inheriting the earth? "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

Under this spirit of meekness I have, several years ago, walked many miles to shake hands, if any one had done me an injury. Meekness can forgive and forget, as well as learn. I never should wish to injure any one. I know that God avengeth the widow, the fatherless, and the poor. "Did not he that made me make my manservant or maidservant also in the womb? did not One fashion us there?" said Job. (Job xxxi.)

I wish with all my heart I was a thousand times a better man in

a gospel sense than I am, in every way; in doctrine, in practice, in experience. So shall meekness, the Spirit's gift, make my soul, like a softened tablet, receive to the fullest depth the engrafted word, in all its life-distilling influences. So shall the inheritance of the earth, in a sense the natural man knows nothing about, be mine, under the soul-transporting smiles of my reconciled Creator.

Abingdon.

I. K.

OBITUARY.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH AND EXPERIENCE OF T. BOORNE, GREENWICH, KENT.

The following brief account is written in the hope that, under the blessing of God, it may prove profitable to the household of faith; wishing grace and peace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth.

The mortal disease which ended the career of our dear young pilgrim, was spinal consumption. For some months before his death he had been ailing, and was thought to be in a decline. Medical advice being procured, a change of air was recommended; the result of which was a hope that a favourable change had taken place in his health. He went for a few weeks to his employment as a clerk, but about five weeks before his death he was obliged to relinquish his situation, when the doctor informed his parents that he was in a consumption. Afterwards he daily grew weaker, till his illness terminated in death.

At an early age he was under serious impressions; and though he did not consider this any part of his experience of a change of heart, nor could he determine upon any exact time; yet it was certainly manifest to some who knew him, that grace (however imperceptible to him) had at an early period taken hold of his heart, and constrained him to "remember his Creator in the days of his youth." His own words, in a letter written a few years back to Mr. Shorter, whose ministry had been much blessed to him, are these: Speaking of eternal things he says: "There was a time when I did not have such thoughts, I know; and that I have them now, I know; but when they began I cannot tell." "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John iii. 8.) Perhaps it may not be deviating from the analogy of faith to say, that our dear departed friend, in his experience, came in at the south gate, and went out at the north; but not without a sweet persuasion that he was a freeman of that celestial city, concerning which it is said, "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls, Salvation, and thy gates, Praise." (Isaiah lx. 18.)

About four years ago, at the death of a relative, his mind was particularly arrested with these words: "Hearken, O daughter, and

consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people and thy father's house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty, for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him." (Psalm xlv. 10, 11.) By these words, he said, he was first encouraged to hope that the Lord would show mercy to him, of which he deeply felt his need.

After this, he was much tried in his mind to know whether the foregoing words were really from the Lord; and when intreating the Lord about it, he had the following words given him with much sweetness, which he considered an answer to his prayer: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter iii. 9.) He was a diligent and earnest seeker in all the appointed means of grace, and manifested to all that knew him that "he desired a better country, that is a heavenly one," of which his conversation at times savoured. He was also an attentive hearer of the word preached, and would often relate a considerable part of what he had been hearing; and in many instances he wrote the substance of several sermons, not having notes to assist his memory. One of these productions appeared in the "Gospel Standard," in August, 1847. Moreover, he made it clearly manifest by his life, walk, and conversation, that he was no friend to the world; but that he possessed the spirit of the fear of the Lord, which Mr. Hart says is

"A fence against evil,
By which we resist
World, flesh, and the devil,
And imitate Christ."

Though he was the subject of many fears as to whether he had ever experienced a real change of heart, yet it was clearly manifest that he was joined in heart to all the living in Jerusalem; and of such there is good hope. His own words in the letter before cited on this point are these: "One thing I cannot deny, that is, that I do love and feel a union to the Lord's people;" and we believe he was rooted and grounded in that most excellent grace (charity, or love) which "is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; hopeth all things; endureth all things;" and that "never faileth," as the day of trial hath declared.

Reader, do thy desires heavenward spring from such a root as this? And art thou, from a felt sense of thy need, saying, with the poor leper who came to Jesus, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean?" Then be assured he will fulfil the desire of them that thus seek him; he will come and save you.

"Those feeble desires, those wishes so weak,
'Tis Jesus inspires, and bids you still seek."

He often thought, because he had not experienced such a deep law work as he had heard some speak of, that he lacked an essential evidence of life, on account of which he was the subject of many tormenting fears. In a letter written by himself, referred to before, he says, respecting the law, "One thing that puzzles and perplexes

me is, that I have not passed the fiery law of Mount Sinai; for when I have heard the children of God speak, (or read their experience,) they generally notice this as the first thing. In this I seem to be excluded, for never have I felt that depth of such trouble as if hell would swallow me up, or that every moment would be my last; these things I know have been experienced by some of the Lord's family, more or less." The dear friend to whom he wrote kindly replied to this part as follows: "You may be as much puzzled to find a law work in you as to find in yourself a clean heart, and a pair of pure hands to come to Christ with; and you may be equally at a loss to find within yourself a proper sense of your need of Jesus in any way to save you; and yet, for all that, whether you have these things or have them not, you must come, and come you do, I believe, when you can find none of them."

In another letter to a friend, (of a later date,) he thus writes respecting a law work: "I fear I have not had a real law work, that I have not sunk deep enough, that I have not had a sense deep enough of my lost estate and corrupt heart;" then speaking of a variety of fears, &c., he adds, "these things make me cry to God to make the work genuine, to show me, if his will, that it is his work in my soul." Now, we have no hesitation in saying that, though he was thus perplexed and exercised, yet the voice of God in his law had been powerful in him, by the effects produced; and a sense of this truth he possessed, viz.: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help." (Hosea xiii. 9.) And this he was seeking, from life received, but from want of mature understanding to see his calling clear, his case was as Mr. Hart has described of many others:

"Daily we groan and mourn
Beneath the weight of sin;
We pray to be new-born,
But know not what we mean;
We think it something very great,
Something that's undiscover'd yet."

During his late affliction he passed through a severe and fiery trial, which was so terribly felt by him, that he exclaimed at one time, in great anguish of spirit, "I shall surely go to hell." But God, who is faithful to his promise, did not suffer him to be tempted above that he was enabled to bear; and we may say of him in the language of Scripture, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." During his affliction the life of God was manifest at intervals, so that our dear young friend bore sweet and satisfactory testimony that

"The feeblest saint shall win the day,
Though death and hell obstruct the way."

One night, when much disturbed by reason of a violent cough, which caused him to weep, the following words came into his mind with comfort:

"The lash is steep'd he on thee lays,
And soften'd in his blood."

He was often overheard praying earnestly, though he could not be prevailed on to speak in prayer so as to be heard, if he knew any one was present, but was desirous to hear others.

At the commencement of his affliction, he found particular sweetness in the following hymns, which seemed like a preparatory intimation of his after conflict:

“Brethren, those who come to bliss,
Come through sore temptations.”

Also,

“Come, ye backsliding sons of God,” &c.

Also,

“Jehovah hath said, 'tis left on record,
The righteous are one with Jesus the Lord;
At all times he loves them, 'twas for them he died!
Yet oft times he proves them, for grace must be tried.”

For several days and nights he was much disturbed with wandering thoughts, which at times were very distressing; but they were removed a few days before his death.

One night he was so horribly beset with blasphemous thoughts, he feared he should be left to utter what he felt within; and O what trembling he felt, and alarming fears lest he had committed the unpardonable sin! But the Lord preserved him, and made Psalm cxvi. very sweet to relieve and comfort his mind, thus fulfilling his own word: “Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.” (Isaiah xli. 10.)

There were several portions of Scripture that had been sweet to him at times in answer to prayer; for, like Jacob of old, the language of his heart was, “I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.”

One time, when in much distress, feeling himself such a great sinner, truly wretched and miserable, he had these words sweetly applied: “Jesus Christ maketh thee whole.” At another time: “The election hath obtained it.” At another time: “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” At another time, when sorely oppressed by Satan, he had these words applied: “He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.” By these scriptures he was comforted and encouraged to hope; thus proving, that “what was written aforetime, was written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”

At another time, after a long season of darkness and barrenness of soul, and fearing on this account he was never in the right way, and begging of the Lord to appear for him, these words came powerfully into his mind, from Psalm cvii. 4, 5, 6: “They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way, they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses.” These words raised his hopes so high, that he could say with all his

heart he believed all would be well with him at last; that he should be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; and he was comforted by hearing the 103rd Psalm read. After this he complained of darkness and fresh discoveries of inward evil, but was again encouraged by the application of these words: "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." After this, at times, he expressed a satisfaction of rest and peace, and of a good hope that he was fixed on the Rock Christ Jesus, and said, Precious, precious Jesus! He also expressed himself resigned to the Lord's will, having no wish to live. A day or two before his death, he wished a hymn to be sung that he made choice of:

"Hail, mighty Jesus! how divine!"

He was too weak to hear it sung, but he enjoyed hearing it read. He was asked if he was happy; he answered, "Very happy." The day before his death he seemed to be longing to leave the body, and said, "Come, Lord." After this he was too weak to converse. About five o'clock the next morning, a little before his death, his dear mother, who was still anxious to know how he felt, asked him if he was happy; he was too weak to speak, but endeavoured to move his head, by which we understood "Yes." Soon after this he breathed his last, without a struggle, sigh, or groan. Thus our dear young friend, Thomas Boorne, fell asleep in Jesus, on Friday, February 8, 1850, aged twenty-one years and seven days.

He was a dutiful and loving son, a kind and affectionate brother, and his walk and conversation as a Christian was well worthy of imitation. His earnest prayer on his death-bed was, as also before, that the Lord would sanctify his death to his dear parents; that he would also support them in the trial, and sanctify it to the family, especially his brothers and sisters; and also that the Lord would bless and prosper Zion. From what he felt at times, he was desirous that some of these things might be written down.

His remains were interred in the Nunhead Cemetery, on Friday, February 15, 1850, where, by his own request, as well as that of others, Mr. Shorter spoke suitably on the occasion, when a goodly number of Christian friends attended.

Yours in sincerity,

Bath Place, Greenwich, March, 1850.

W. B.

The prophets of old had the Spirit in a limited manner, only with respect to some particular revelations, and sometimes spoke of themselves; but Christ had the Spirit always residing in him, without stated measure or limitation; and therefore spoke always the words of God. The more of the Spirit of God that any person hath, the more will he speak the words of God. Now, the Spirit was never in any mere creature but as in a vessel; but the Spirit was, and is, in Christ as a mountain, and as in a bottomless ocean; therefore his words may well be depended upon and rested in as the words of God.—*Ralph Erskine.*

REVIEW.

A Stone from the Brook; being a Faithful Letter to Frederick Tryon.
By WILLIAM BROWN, Godmanchester. London: Groombridge
and Sons, 5, Paternoster-row.

(Concluded from page 216.)

Controversy and strife are things so painful in themselves to every living soul, that nothing short of absolute necessity can warrant any one to engage in them who values his own peace of mind, or, what is of far greater consequence, the peace of the church of God. Such a necessity seems now laid upon us. Neutrality and silence may be, for private individuals, the safest, wisest, and happiest course; but when a man occupies a public or prominent post, what in them might be wisdom, in him may be desertion.

John M'Kenzie was for many years not only a minister well known unto, and much esteemed and loved by the churches, and a personal friend of our own, but an editor of this magazine. Now, then, that his memory is attacked, and an attempt made to show that he died in his sins, should we not be utterly unworthy of the post that we occupy if, consulting only our own ease, we stood by without offering a word in his favour? Would not this silence on our part be interpreted either that we had nothing to say in his defence, or that, being able to defend him, we were afraid to do so?

To this we may add, that there are, doubtless, scattered up and down the land many to whom the ministry and writings of poor M'Kenzie have been blessed. These received and loved him, as a man taught and sent of God. If, then, a doubt be cast upon the reality of his experience, it will fall, to a certain extent, upon theirs. If he be wrong, why not they? Some, therefore, of these may be much harassed and distressed by this attempt to overthrow his religion, for theirs may seem, to some extent, bound up with his. Might not these interpret our silence into an admission that we had not a word to offer in his defence? We might, therefore, by our silence strengthen their fears, and thus help on their calamity.

M'Kenzie, too, was well known and much esteemed as an able and experienced steward of the mysteries of God, even by many who cannot speak of any particular blessing received under his ministry. His sermon on the "Sealing of the Spirit" has been widely read, and much approved of by the people of God; and his letters in the "Standard" have generally been considered weighty and experimental. He was a man of good experience, was often much tried and exercised in his mind, possessed considerable ability as a minister, and was owned and blessed to many souls. If a man of his experience, tenderness of conscience, and general consistency of life, knowledge of the truth, usefulness and acceptability to the churches, is cut off as a deceived man, what standard must we set up as warranting us to receive any one as a minister of Christ?

Occupying, then, the position that we do, who is publicly to defend him if we do not? If you have a Christian friend, and his

name, memory, and character are, as you believe, falsely accused in your presence, will you hold your tongue, and let him be traduced in silence? Are you not compelled to speak in his defence? Put yourself into our place, and see whether under these circumstances we had any course open to us but to vindicate his name and memory.

This, then, must be our apology for entering into the subject at all, or for prolonging it beyond the limits of a single Number.

But though constrained by our very position to engage in this unhappy strife, it is our desire to do so in the spirit of the gospel, "with meekness and fear," and yet sacrificing neither truth nor firmness; not defending M'Kenzie's name and memory from party motives, or in a party spirit, but from love to him as a man of truth and as a man of God.

The worst part, we think, of Mr. Tryon's attack upon poor M'Kenzie, is the way in which he attempts to overthrow the account given in the letter from Darley Dale of his spiritual blessings. Mr. Brown thus comments upon this point:

"On the same page of your pamphlet that I have just referred to, you give another extract from the letter written at Darley Dale, as follows: 'Could I tell you all the particulars of the bright beams of his loving-kindness and tender mercies, both in providence and to my soul experimentally, and how exceedingly precious his word and people were to my heart, and how I was humbled in self-loathing and contrition, and how I was solemnized, and my affections separated from the world, you would, I think, believe it was not in wrath, but in kindness.'

"You say, in answer to this, 'This, as it stands, is very good to read, but it proves nothing, for such language is used by others of the confederacy, who are of necessity deceived.' Let me remind you, he was writing to a friend, not to Frederick Tryon: to one who, I doubt not, was ready to believe though the half were not told him. And of what use is the command, 'Let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay,' &c., if the word of a disciple is not to be believed? Things are indeed come to an awful pass, if such assertions, by such a man, and on such an occasion, are to be discredited."

The summary mode in which Mr. T. disposes of the account which M'Kenzie gives of his blessings at Darley Dale is very remarkable. When a person against whom we have a prejudice tells us that God has blessed his soul, it certainly is a decisive way of dealing both with it and him to reply, "I don't believe a word of it." But is it a right way; is it a scriptural way? Should it not rather remove the prejudice, or at any rate, make us pause and distrust our former unfavourable opinion? In churches, how continually are prejudices and divisions among members removed by God's blessing the soul of one of the contending parties! A blessing from God heals breaches, makes the weapons of contention fall, and melts hearts into union and love. What a mercy it would have been if such had been the effect upon Mr. T.'s mind of the blessings enjoyed by poor M'Kenzie at Darley Dale!

But as this was not the case, the prejudice was rather strengthened, and Mr. T. doubtless felt that if the experience here described by

M'Kenzie, of "the bright beams of God's loving-kindness and tender mercies," &c., were really and spiritually enjoyed by him, all attempts to prove him finally and fatally deluded must fall to the ground. To admit that there was anything truly gracious and divine in the account that M'Kenzie here gives of his experience at Darley Dale, would be to cut the ground from under his own feet.

How, then, does he obviate this difficulty? By boldly assuming that he was deceived. His words are worth quoting again, as they are such a clue to his mind:

"This, as it stands, is very good to read; but it proves nothing, for such language is used by others of the confederacy, who are of necessity deceived."

What "*confederacy*" is this?

Was M'Kenzie really banded with certain men to fight against God and truth—a "*confederacy*" of hypocrites and liars? What a term to use against a man of God like M'Kenzie, representing him as conspiring with others against God and godliness!

It is truly grievous to see Mr. T. permitting himself to use such language, and attempting by so reproachful a word to cast discredit on a man like M'Kenzie.

But, apart from all spiritual grounds, one would have thought Mr. T. would have seen the absurdity of such an argument. Let us test it by applying this reasoning to other things. The Bible professes to be a revelation from God: The Koran professes to be a revelation from God. The Koran is false; therefore the Bible may be so. Peter professed to be an apostle of Jesus Christ. Judas professed to be an apostle of Jesus Christ. But Judas was of necessity deceived. Therefore Peter might be deceived too. Or apply it to Mr. T.'s own case: Mr. T. believes he has received a certain commission from God. Others have said the same thing of themselves, as Brothers, Irving, &c. But these men were of necessity deceived. Therefore Mr. T. may be. Who does not see the absurdity of such reasoning? In fact, it is doing away with all human testimony altogether, and establishing general scepticism and infidelity. If one servant in a family be a rogue, does that make all the others thieves? If there be one deceiver in a church, does that make all the other members hypocrites? If there be some bad sovereigns in circulation, does that prove all the rest counterfeits?

Well then, what must we do if there are deceivers who use the language of honest men? Try their testimony by other evidences surely. Is the testimony consistent with itself and with the word of God? Look at the general character of the person. Examine his past experience, to see whether he may not deceive himself; and his life and conduct, whether he may not try to deceive you. Consider the circumstances under which the testimony is given, the person to whom made, the motives of the testifier, &c. &c. We need not enlarge here, as the whole turns upon one point—the *credibility of the witness*. But Mr. T.'s argument, if argument it can be called,

destroys all testimony, and carried out, would destroy the Bible itself. In fact, viewed merely as an argument, it is either the greatest nonsense, or disguised infidelity. And how, like a swivel gun, it may be turned against every gracious man that ever said or wrote that God has ever blessed his soul! It might be turned against Hart's and Huntington's experience as well as M'Kenzie's, and even against Paul's itself. And, indeed, it is the very argument whereby Voltaire and such men have sought to overthrow miracles and prophecy, by showing that there have been deceivers who employed, and deceived who credited both.

As an argument, therefore, it is utterly worthless. But as it raises a question whether we are to believe M'Kenzie or not, let us consider the circumstances under which he declared that God blessed his soul when at Darley Dale. He must either have spoken truly or falsely. If truly, the question is settled, and his soul is with Jesus. If falsely, he was either deceived, or a deceiver. Was he *deceived*? Consider the circumstances of the case. He was not a novice—unacquainted with the deceitfulness of the heart or the devices of Satan. He had known much too of the dealings of God upon his soul, both in judgment and mercy. He was in a very trying spot—his life hanging on a thread. He was a man much accustomed to self-examination, and was generally suspicious of every thing that did not come with power to his soul. He describes in his letter the sinking before the rising, the bitter before the sweet, the fear before it was cast out by perfect love. Was it not a time too when the Lord usually appears to his children, a time of sickness and sorrow? Surely it does not demand a large share of that "charity" or love which "thinketh no evil," "believeth all things, hopeth all things," to credit M'Kenzie's testimony.

Still less can we believe him to have been a *deceiver*.

The letter was written to a private friend, without the least idea of publication. What motive had he to deceive him? Sincerity was stamped upon M'Kenzie's words and actions. We know few men who had less cant and hypocrisy than he. Wilful deceit is one of the last things that can justly be laid to his charge.

We need not pursue the argument, as we do not find Mr. T. charging him with being a wilful *deceiver*. He would rather view him as deceived and deluded by Satan.

But one would have thought that a man acting and writing in the fear of God would have weighed the matter well in the balances of the sanctuary, before he would publicly pronounce M'Kenzie even a *deceived* man. He would weigh all that he knew in his favour. He would consider his past experience, and try it by the word of God and his own. If he had ever read his writings, heard him preach, or been in his company, he would endeavour to recall what impression had been made upon his mind, or what power and savour accompanied it to his soul. If he had ever felt any union with him, he would dread to fight against him. If conscious of any prejudice or unkind feeling, he would watch over it with godly jealousy. He

would be afraid of his own spirit. Knowing the deceitfulness of the heart, and not being ignorant of Satan's devices, he would fear lest he, by pursuing his own spirit, might fight against God. He would also consider the profit of the church of Christ, and fear lest he might distress the real lovers of experimental truth, and strengthen the hands of the enemies of vital godliness. All these considerations put together, one would think, would have some weight in turning the scale.

Mr. T. complains that his "opponents pervert all equity, and falsify the balances by deceit" against him. But is not this the very thing that he does himself? Or if he do not falsify the balance, he falsifies the weights, which amounts to the same thing. For instance, in the case of poor M'Kenzie, is it fair or equitable to put into one scale that he was deceived by a false impression at Darley Dale, and not place in the other scale his general experience and character as a Christian and a man of God? Even natural men, in weighing a man's character, consider what is in his favour, as well as what is against him. Their sense of natural justice especially revolts from the idea of bringing forward the defects of the dead, and omitting all mention of their good qualities. And if this be the feeling and practice of natural men, how much more should it be the case with those who desire to act in the fear of God! There is not a man or minister living, no, nor a Bible saint, who would not be found wanting, were all his defects and sins put into one scale, and nothing that the grace of God had done for him placed in the other.

But we will go a step further. We can conceive a man well taught in the ways of God much impressed with the circumstances of the case, and his mind much exercised about M'Kenzie's letter from Darley Dale as compared with his death. He might come to the conclusion that M'Kenzie was partly deceived in his feelings from the application of John xi. 4 to his soul; and he might feel himself called upon to warn the church of God against false impressions. He might indeed consider silence under such circumstances blameable. But would he not write with the greatest caution? In taking forth the precious from the vile, would he not carefully separate the spiritual from the natural? Would he not write with tenderness and affection; and whilst warning the church of God against mistaking impressions for manifestations, would he not show that a man might be deceived upon one point, and yet not be deceived upon all? And would he not speak of the deceased with the greatest kindness and affection, and put forth all that might be said in his favour in the clearest point of view?

Now the question at once arises, has Mr. T. shown this spirit? And comparing this attack upon M'Kenzie with the spirit and precepts of the gospel, is there any reason to believe that the blessed Spirit was the author of it? Let the matter be viewed apart from all personal feeling, as seen in the light of the gospel, and would not nine gracious persons out of ten condemn it?

Putting aside, therefore, all personal feelings, and looking at the

matter in a broad and general light, what spiritual object is gained by this attack? Does it promote the good of the church or the glory of God? Would it comfort a poor broken-hearted saint to be assured that M'Kenzie is gone to hell? Would it speak pardon and peace to a guilty conscience, to believe that a man might know all that M'Kenzie knew, believe all that he believed, and experience all that he experienced, and yet be lost at last? Such an attack as this must cause much dissension and strife. Is God glorified by such things? Is it the spirit of the gospel? Does attacking the dead correspond with "praying for our enemies, blessing those that curse us, following after peace, being kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another?" Is it "walking in love, putting on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any?" How strong is the New Testament against such a spirit!

"Blessed are the meek"—"the merciful"—"the peace-makers." "Judge not, that ye be not judged." "Why beholdest thou the mote," &c. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth." "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment." "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law; but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one law-giver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who art thou that judgest another?"

The whole spirit and precepts of the gospel are alike opposed to such proceedings.

And if there be one man above all others who should obey the precepts of the gospel, it is Mr. Tryon himself. His grand complaint against the ministers and churches of the present day is, their neglect of the precepts of the gospel. And yet who has violated them more than he? The grand leading *precept* of the gospel, "These things I command you, that ye love one another;" its distinguishing *badge*, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another;" its peculiar *spirit*, "Love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God,"—have all been neglected and violated by this attack upon M'Kenzie.

But though we must condemn the spirit of Mr. T., as shown in this attack upon poor M'Kenzie, we do not mean thereby to give an unqualified approbation of Mr. Brown's pamphlet.

1. Our first objection is to its *title*. This assumes that Mr. Tryon is a *Goliath*, an enemy and an adversary to the armies of Israel, and that Mr. Brown is *David*. Now we cannot consent to such an assumption on either side. We highly blame Mr. T.'s general spirit and drift, and think this last attack upon the dead totally unjustifiable; but we do not consider him an enemy of God. And though Mr. B. has slung the stone with some force and skill, it remains to be

proved whether he have the commission and office of the son of Jesse.

2. Nor do we like all *the details*. The comparison, for instance, of Mr. T. with the Ishmaelite is hardly fair. Ishmael of old was a typical character, but we have no reason to believe that the Bedouin Arab, his presumed descendant, is so too. A gracious man may on conscientious grounds be opposed to vaccination, &c., fond of and kind to his horse, without thereby proving himself akin to Ishmael. It savours too much of a carnal weapon, and is more likely to excite a smile on one side, or needlessly wound on the other, than touch the conscience of any.

3. But our greatest objection is to *the spirit* of the book. It is too much like Mr. Tryon's own spirit, and therefore falls into the very error which it condemns. A contentious spirit should not be met by a contentious spirit. *That* only provokes further strife. The way, the only safe, wise, and scriptural way, is to meet a contentious spirit by a gospel spirit. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go with him a mile, go with him twain." (Matt. v. 38—41.)

The gospel way to meet such a spirit as Mr. T. displays, is to acknowledge evil or error where pointed out, to amend where possible, and not to return railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing. There are evils confessedly in the churches. Those evils should be pointed out. The spirit of the gospel is to point them out in meekness and affection. Here Mr. T. has grievously failed; and influenced, as it appears to us, by a legal spirit, has departed from the spirit and precepts of the gospel. The usual effects have followed. Suspicion, bitterness, prejudice, strife, and confusion have all sprung up as a thick crop; and Mr. T. may live to reap a portion of what he has so plenteously sowed.

But because he has erred we are not to imitate him. Nay, the more clearly that we see his spirit the more we ought to avoid it. And this benefit we hope may arise from his attack upon poor M'Kenzie, that his spirit thereby will be more clearly shown.

As regards ourselves, it was with the greatest unwillingness that we interfered in the strife. Our desire and aim are much embodied in the entry that a good man once made in his note-book: "*Mem.* For the future, to have no controversy with any body but myself." To this we hope to adhere; and, avoiding contention and strife, to "follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."

But if any that fear God are still hesitating about the state and standing of poor M'Kenzie, we would advise them to read his experience, recently published, and then let them ask themselves whether they would wish to be found fighting against the name, character, and memory of such a man.

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 a 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. 10.

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SORROW AND COMFORT; OR, CONFLICTS AND TRIUMPHS THE COMMON LOT OF ALL REAL BELIEVERS.

BY JOHN RUSK.

“The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.”—PROV. xiv. 10.

(Continued from page 228.)

11. There is a rejoicing at times *in the rich and abundant provision* which God has made in his dear Son, which far exceeds our expectation, and appears wonderful indeed. Now, take notice of the following texts. I can truly say that my heart ere now has leaped for joy in sweet meditation on them. But observe, reader, if you cannot come up to Paul when he says he is “the chief of sinners;” or with Job when he says, “Behold, I am vile,” you never will highly prize such texts, nor see that glory in them which I have seen.

First, Then, *mercy*. Who needs it? Such as the publican. And is there a great provision made? O yes: “God who is rich in mercy.” Only weigh this, and consider how great God is, and for him to be “rich in mercy.” I heard a dear man of God preach a blessed discourse upon this text once.

Secondly, It is a great thing indeed to *pardon* a sinner. But O, fellow-traveller, look at thyself since thou hast experienced this pardon. Art thou not astonished at what God puts up with from thee? If you are not, I am. The sins I have committed again and again against light and love, O how they have sunk and distressed me! And why is it that we are not cast away? It is because he is “rich in mercy.” “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, and

because his compassions fail not." The prophet Isaiah says, "He will abundantly pardon."

Thirdly, What a blessed thing it is to have *spiritual and divine life* communicated! But after this, how dead we do feel to all that is good, how careless and indifferent! Yet there is a rich provision of this also; and therefore our Lord says, "I am come that my sheep might have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." Is not this joyful news to poor sinners, who feel what they still are in consequence of the Adam-fall transgression?

Fourthly, *Grace*. "By grace are ye saved." What, in a scanty way? Yes, say you, Job says, he escaped with "the skin of his teeth." Paul says, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" and Peter, "If the righteous scarcely be saved," &c. To all which I answer, that this narrowness and contraction is not in God, but in us, when we are in a shut-up state. But look at the great and ample provision: "Much more they which receive the *abundance* of grace and of the gift of righteousness."

Fifthly, *Redemption*. "We are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot,"—redeemed out of the hand of Satan and from his drudgery, from a vain conversation, from the curse of the law, and from death; not *barely* redeemed, but *fully*; for "with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is *plenteous* redemption."

I can only hint at these things; indeed, upon them volumes might be filled.

Sixthly, *Goodness*. Who can ever describe this? We do not attempt to do it; yet we may lisp out a little. To me it is beyond all description. Daily are we laden with its benefits, for he opens his hand and richly supplies us; indeed, all the human race share in his goodness in providence, but we especially who are the objects of his everlasting love. Now, this goodness is a part of that covenant name which Moses speaks of, "abundant in goodness." A Trinity of Persons in God manifests it. It flows from God the Father, through God the Son the Mediator, by God the Holy Ghost, into our hearts every time we enjoy it; and then it is that the Holy Spirit enables us to ascribe all the glory to a Triune God. Ah, fellow-traveller! you will never get to the bottom of your just deserts as a vile sinner, or of the unbounded goodness of God to you. I am lost in relating it.

Seventhly, *Regeneration and renewing*. This also is wonderful. Regeneration is once done; but renewing is a work that is continually going on while we live in this world. This renewing appears to me to be a subduing of the old man, and enabling us to put on the new; and I have found these changes to be very sudden. O what a sore conflict arises from the old man when he gets up! Truly it is a very hell felt in the heart. But glory be to God the eternal Spirit, that he condescends to subdue it and raise up his own implanted grace; and then we are renewed, or made new again, for that time. And as you could before look in your heart, and see every evil working, so that you have been terrified, now you can look and see all that

is good—faith, hope, love, peace, quietness, rest, bowels of mercy, patience, meekness, &c., so that you are not like the same person. Ah! say you, but I feel worse than any one, and really am afraid at times that I am within a step of the great transgression, for I feel such bitterness, malice, and enmity, without cause; I certainly am all wrong together. Do not despair. He that is now writing has been in all this dangerous and perilous path, and yet been brought out of it again and again; for there is a blessed provision made. Observe the text, “Not by works of righteousness that we have done, but of his mercy he saves us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, [and then mind,] which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.” Here is abundant washing and renewing. Cheer up, for there is no room to despair.

Eighthly, *Righteousness*. Ah! say some, my heart sinks when that word is spoken, for I feel so much unrighteousness. I always thought that when a sinner was converted to God, he would feel himself better and better—feel righteous, and that old things would pass away, and that all things would become new. But I feel quite opposite to all this, and really get worse and worse. I well know where you are, and it is a safe, although a painful path. You must either go on in this way, or else in self-righteousness. But, after all, you do have these renewings, and then you can see righteousness. Now all this painful teaching is not because there is not provision made. O no—righteousness is as much ours as if we always felt it. But it is to keep us out of self and looking to Christ. See where Job got by admiring self, and so would you and I. But observe the blessed provision made. “Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation; and let righteousness spring up together. I the Lord have created it.” (Isaiah xlv. 8.)

Ninthly, *Unconditional promises*. What a wonderful thing this is! I repeat it, unconditional promises. Ah! say you, but there are conditional promises also to believers. No, not one for them to fulfil as considered in themselves. God well knows what we are, and he does not expect grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles. He is no hard master; and what are we as considered in ourselves but thorns and thistles? Does not Paul tell us that all the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ Jesus? And though all are not unconditional, yet they are yea and amen. Now look well into this, for it is for your comfort. But say you, Why are not all the promises to believers unconditional? I answer, that this way cuts off and condemns both the Pharisee and the Antinomian. The Pharisee rejects all unconditional promises, and the Antinomian rejects all the conditional. Thus both are wrong. But how can both of these promises answer to a child of God, when he sees and feels himself so vile and altogether helpless? I will tell you: Under a deep discovery of the fall, O how his heart is filled at times with joy at such texts as these: “Without money and without price;” “I will be their God, and they shall be my people;” “I will love them freely!” Now, all this just suits him. Well, in our travels

we shall meet with some that will heartily agree to all this, and at the same time live in sin contentedly. It is no trouble to them. They walk after the imagination of their own hearts, and yet say, Peace. Now, this is a damnable delusion of the devil; and therefore in comes the necessity for the conditional promise. But how is that to be done? Why, under the renewings of the Holy Ghost. I will mention two or three; "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly;" "Be kindly affectioned one to another, in honour preferring one another;" "Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us;" "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him;" "I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me." Well then, under the renewings we find all these things, for God works in us to will and to do, and we can do "all things through Christ which strengthens us." But where is the man that leads a loose life? Why, cut off, as well as he that trusts in himself. Well, now, these promises are astonishing. Observe: "Whereby are given unto us promises." That is a blessed thing, say you. Yes it is, but that is not all: "Whereby are given unto us *precious* promises." That is better, say you; for what is precious must be valuable. Yet they may not be very full: "Whereby are given unto us *great* and precious promises." This exceeds the rest, for great promises and precious promises, and all a free gift, what can be added to them? O yes, the rich provision in the promises goes beyond all this: "Whereby are given unto us *exceeding* great and precious promises." (2 Peter i. 4.)

But tenthly, I must not forget *our food*, for there is abundance of that. It may be asked what a spiritual man feeds upon. I answer, that one who is taught by the Holy Spirit to know his own heart, and is in a perishing condition, like the prodigal, cannot feed on husks or his own performances. O no; neither can he feed upon the vanities or fooleries of this world. No; God has blessed him with a spiritual appetite, a hungering and thirsting after the living and true God, and nothing short of God will satisfy him. You may see this in David: "As the hart panteth after the water brook, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, yea, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?" (Psalm xlii. 1, 2.) What such a soul wants is to feed upon Christ; for he says, "I am the bread of life; he that eateth me even he shall live by me; my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood drink indeed." But say you, What does all this mean? It is a mystical feeding. A man covetous after money feeds upon gain; a lover of pleasure upon vain amusements and empty vanities; an unclean person upon sensual and vile gratifications; but a sensible sinner, one wounded in spirit, his appetite mystically is after Christ crucified. Nor will hearing of it with the ear satisfy such a man, however clearly preached, nor a clear understanding of what he does hear either. Not but that he likes all this; but he wants something more, and he prays, and reads God's word and good books. Yet, in themselves considered, he finds that food is not in any of those things. All is shut up fast, and will be so until the

Holy Spirit draws forth his faith into lively exercise upon the Lord Jesus Christ and his finished work—for him as an individual. Now the gradual moving of this faith is eating and drinking, and as this enters the heart and conscience we feel a fulness in it; and when we are quite sure that he bore our sins in his own body on the tree, this full assurance of faith is a full assurance of satisfaction, and we are quite as sensible of this as a hungry man is who, with a keen appetite, sits down and eats a hearty dinner. This, reader, is really the truth of God.

Say some, I am not so particular as all this, nor do I wish to be so inquisitive. I am satisfied with hearing the word. I love to hear it preached clearly by a man that has a clear understanding, then I go away pleased, and rejoice in what I have been hearing. Yes, but if you go no further, wherein do you differ from the wayside and stony ground hearer? They received the word with joy, but after all they fell away. This will not do. We must and shall be particular if we have spiritual life in our own souls; for this life must be fed, and Christ must be eaten by a living faith. Thousands now in hell have gone as far as you have; and therefore I would say to you, as Paul did to the Corinthians, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." Say you, I do not like such close work; I like to go on a large scale. It matters not what you like; God's word will stand fast: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." Then such must be dead, and "God is not the (covenant) God of the dead, but of the living."

But some poor tried and tempted child of God may be ready to say, I have long felt my need of Christ; I have long felt myself a perishing sinner. I have heard the word a long time, for years, yet I never could arrive at what you have said. I have had lifts and encouragements under the word again and again, and a hope of better days, but never could go further. Well, bless God for that. This is God's work in you, and we are not by any means to despise the "day of small things." Keep on watching and waiting at Wisdom's gates, at the posts of her door, and you will in God's own time prove that he is faithful who hath promised, who also will do it. And what is that? Why, "I will abundantly bless Zion's provision, and satisfy her poor with bread." "Delays are not denials," says Boston. Some have not fully found what they had long sought after till on their death-bed. But what a blessing to have the least desire in heart after such things! Well, then, there is plenty. O yes: "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." Yes, and there is a variety, if I may so speak, in Christ Jesus. You know a man may eat a meal of very coarse fare; not so here. Here is the finest of the wheat. Here are rich provisions. (Psalm xxxvi. 7, 8.) Take notice: "In this mountain," (that is, Zion, the church of God, his beloved people, "I will say unto Zion, Thou art my people,") "In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people, (not every individual of mankind; no, but unto all people belonging to the elec-

tion of grace; high, low, rich, or poor, of every nation, kindred, tongue, or people, Jews or Gentiles, it matters not, God has no respect of persons,) a feast of fat things." What is this feast? Paul will tell you: "Christ our passover was sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast." You see it is Christ crucified, and it is a feast of fat things, full of marrow and fatness, like the fatted calf that was killed for the prodigal. A feast of wine on the lees, that is, not mixed wine, but pure and unadulterated. Here we have the love of Christ: "Thy love is better than wine." It goes down sweetly, "causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak." (Song vii. 9.) It signifies also the blood of Christ: "Drink ye all of it." These wines were well refined. O what did he wade through in his life and death! and what a scene of sufferings, on all hands, such as is inexpressible! "Well refined!"

From what has been said, and I have only hinted at it, you see how very abundantly we are supplied.

Eleventhly, I will drop one thing more, and then close this part of the subject, and that is, "*the riches of glory.*" O who can tell this? Why, none as it really is. Yet we may talk about it. I shall briefly say a little.

The great apostle of the Gentiles was highly favoured. He was caught up to the third heaven, and had an abundance of revelations and visions. He earnestly prays to God to favour the church of Ephesus with these things in the enjoyment of them. Observe: "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." (Eph. i. 18.) What are we heirs of? Why, we are heirs of the grace of life, heirs of righteousness, heirs of the kingdom of God, heirs of salvation, heirs of blessing, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; and therefore we are exceedingly rich. Yet we have but little here below. However, when death comes we shall take full possession of our inheritance, and then we shall know what "the riches of the glory of this inheritance" are; which I believe will be all light without any darkness, all life without any deadness, all righteousness without any condemnation, which now we often feel; salvation, also, without any danger. The promises will all be completely fulfilled, and we filled with everlasting love in Christ's image, perfect in knowledge, and our hearts and voices filled with praise; crowns on our heads, and palms of victory in our hands, and we casting our crowns at his feet, and singing, "Unto him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, and made us kings and priests unto God," and we shall reign for ever and ever. "The riches of the glory!" O what a glory will there be in the saints when they shine forth as the sun in the righteousness of Christ, and in the glory of their Father's kingdom for ever and ever, and when they shall be led to living fountains of water; when Christ will show us plainly of the Father, and we shall sit down with him on his throne, being more than conquerors, in company with legions of holy angels, and

they all singing and adoring their Maker. But as the poet says so it is,

“The fulness here we cannot tell,
But, Lord, we die to know.”

Now, have you never rejoiced in the abundant provision God has been pleased to make? I have again and again, and so did David, as it is written: “I rejoice at thy word as one that findeth great spoil.” (Psalm cxix. 162.) This is “treasure hid in a field, (or in God’s word,) the which, when a man has found, he hideth it, (he never will find it until the Holy Spirit reveal it to him, and he hides it in his heart: “Thy word have I hid in my heart,” says David,) “and for joy thereof he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.” (Matt. xiii. 44.) That is, he in heart forsakes everything that would stand in competition with Christ the treasure, saying, “Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison with thee.”

(To be continued.)

MY SHEEP SHALL NEVER PERISH.

I again attempt to give you a few more outlines of the Lord’s dealings with me. Little did I think, when the Lord first called me by his grace and set my soul at happy liberty, when he enabled me to see, and feel too, that I was complete in Jesus, and that my sins were for ever cast behind his back, that I should have again to feel the abominations of my wicked and rebellious nature, and to pass through such deep waters. But O what a mercy that I have not sunk, and become a prey to the devil, as Judas!

I got into a very careless way about religion. “The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways.” I know this by experience. About four months ago, I heard one of the most searching subjects treated of that I ever heard in my life. I not only heard it, but it was brought home with power to my soul. The minister spoke very much on the difference of that religion which is of God and that which is of the flesh. I would to God there was more such preaching. Then I began to inquire, What am I? and whose am I? The devil said, You are nothing but a hypocrite; your religion is that of the flesh, and it will end in the flesh. According to my feelings, I thought it all true. Then I remembered God and was troubled. I was filled with shame and confusion, and was ashamed to look upward; I thought that God was about to cut me off, and that he was showing me what I was.

I have been in such dark places that I thought there was no more hope for me than for devils. Night after night I was afraid to go to bed; Satan would say, “This will be your last night.”

I have found it a grievous and a bitter thing to depart from the living God, and he only knows what I have had to suffer for it.

These words seemed to follow me: "Light is sown for the righteous." But I thought, Surely this cannot be for me, for I am unrighteous, and full of rebellion and blasphemy.

One day, however, I was driven almost to my wit's end; I took up my Bible, and opened it at the Song of Solomon ii. When I came to the 10th verse, light from heaven broke into my soul: "My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one; and come away." O what condescension for God to speak to such a sinner as I in such language as this! I was again enabled to bless God that he had given me another token of his love. Another time I had these words: "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." After this I had to sink again lower than ever. Then Satan would say, "All you enjoy is sparks of your own kindling;" and I thought I was nothing but a presumptuous hypocrite. I have trembled that ever I should have made a profession of religion. O how I have wished that my name had never been put in the church's books, for I have thought that my state in hell would be worse for it! O what will or can a profession do for us, or what will the doctrines of grace do for us, if we have not the grace of the doctrines in our hearts? My body has been brought very low through the afflictions of my mind. These seasons have been very trying to flesh and blood; but they have been very valuable; they have brought down my cursed pride, and stripped me from my idols. I have been brought to hate and loathe myself; I have been brought to the feet of Jesus, like a little child, and I have been enabled to say, Here I am, Lord, do with me as thou seest fit; I am nothing, and I have nothing. O what a glorious suitability have I been enabled to see in Jesus (at these seasons) as my wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and eternal redemption. I have had soul-lifting seasons, as well as castings down. Bless his dear name, that ever he should fix his everlasting love on such a monster of iniquity! True, at times I wish I could love him more, when he is pleased to come with such words as these: "Thy faith hath made thee whole." Not duty faith, not natural faith, but the faith which is of the operation of God the Holy Ghost. Then I can tell Satan he is a liar, not in my own strength, for I feel the power of what Jesus said to his disciples: "Without me ye can do nothing." Yet I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. I have thought, at these seasons, Well, I can never doubt him any more. But it is only for him to hide his face, and down I go again. And here I am obliged to lie until the dear Lord is pleased to come and raise me up: "By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small." (Amos vii. 5.) It is only by the God of Jacob. There was a time when I did not feel as I now do, yet I had a profession of religion; but I was in the cradle of carnal security, the devil giving me a false peace. When I used to go to the Arminian class meetings, and tell lies every week, the devil did not tell me then I was a hypocrite, or that my religion was fleshly, and would end in the flesh. No; but he is a liar, and knows it too, for the dear Lord has enabled me to tell him so again and again, and boldly

too. And, blessed be God! there are times when I can tell him he shall never, never have me. But this is when I am on the mount feasting on God's eternal love, when he is saying, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and with loving kindness have I drawn thee;" when I have the Trinity of Persons with me, God as my Father, Christ as my Saviour, the Holy Spirit as my Comforter. At such times I scarcely know where I am; I feel lost in wonder, love, and praise. At other times I feel that I have no more love to God and his people than I have for sin and Satan, nor half so much. O what a mercy that God changes not! He is of one mind, and none can turn him: "I give unto my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish."

Untried members and deacons of churches, yes, and untried ministers too, only put stumbling-blocks in the way of a poor cast down, sin-bitten, tempest-tossed child of God. I know this by experience. When I told some the state of my mind, I was told that I was in a very dangerous place, and if I did not come down, they did not know what would be the consequence. Poor things! Talk of coming down, when at the same time I was in the lowest hell in my feelings, and was sure that none but God could ever do me any good and raise me up. And, blessed be his dear name! he hath in his own good and set time done it, and set my feet on the rock, Christ. But who hath made me to differ? and what have I that I have not received? Nothing that is good. I feel that God must work in me the will as well as the power to do anything that is good, so that I have not a stone to throw at the vilest sinner in London. I not only say it, but I feel it. When the Lord first called me by his grace, and showed me how I was to be saved, he said, "I do not this for your sake, but for my holy name's sake." I believe there never was, nor ever will be, such a monster of iniquity as I feel myself to be; but O what a mercy the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from all sin! Amen.

London, August 22nd.

EVEN TO HOAR HAIRS WILL I CARRY YOU.

Being well acquainted with a dear aged saint of God, who was a reader of the *Gospel Standard* from the commencement, and whose dying testimony of the Lord's faithfulness and love to his soul was so cheering, comforting, encouraging, confirming, and strengthening to my own soul, as well as to several friends who visited him in his last days on earth, I thought, perhaps, the account of the Lord's dealings with him in his last hours, &c., may not altogether prove unprofitable to your readers.

His name was Elias Ferris. More than fifty years ago the Lord was pleased to stop him in his mad career of sin and vanity, by opening his eyes to see the awful state that he was in by nature: after which, he told me that for the space of ten years, being igno-

rant of God's righteousness, he strove hard to weave a garment of his own by strictly attending to means as duties. But the Lord in his providence sent a servant of his to preach at the chapel where he attended. This (the dear old man told me a few days before his death) was more than forty years ago. "Under that sermon I was," said he, "convinced of the insufficiency of all my doings, and stripped like unto a bird picked." After this, for many years he still continued to attend the chapel. The minister, who was an Independent, professed Calvinistic doctrines, and was, I believe, a good man. The last words I recollect hearing him say on his death-bed were, "James, I am a sinner saved by grace." Our dear friend, Mr. Warburton, preached for him more than thirty years ago, under whose ministry the soul of our late friend was very much comforted and refreshed; and often have I heard him express his great esteem for Mr. W., as he has heard him several times in different places with much comfort.

About eighteen years ago, at the above named minister's death, the place got into the hands of the Home Missionary Society. They sent a devouring wolf there, who soon scattered the few sheep, by which means the dear old man, who stood firm for the truth, with the rest of the friends, was quite deprived of it. He was getting into years, and felt the infirmities of his poor body, which had been at different times severely bruised by accidental falls from houses when at work upon them. His eyesight failing him also, and no truth without going miles for it, he, to his great grief, as I have often heard him relate, was very destitute of enjoyed communion with the family of God. But in the year 1835, hearing of the publication of the *Gospel Standard*, he commenced taking it in from the first number, and continued it until his death. Many times have I heard him express how the contents of the *Standard* have been blessed to his soul's comfort, and how thankful he felt on account of its publication, he being so deprived of hearing or meeting with the people of God. Rusk's pieces, together with the letters of Huntington, Warburton, and others, have often afforded him a banquet in the wilderness. This proves one among the many instances (as yet unknown) in which the Lord has blessed the contents of the *Standard* to the edification, establishment, and consolation of his secluded ones. "He will satisfy his poor with bread," and devise means that his banished be not expelled from him. "He forgetteth not the cry of the humble, nor despiseth the prayer of the destitute, for his mercy endureth for ever;" and this enduring mercy was the theme of the dear old man's song, even down to the Jordan of death.

It pleased the Lord, about the month of December last, to confine him to his bed. His pains of body were at times very great. When I called to see him I asked him how he felt. "My bodily pains," he said, "are great indeed, but the dear Lord is very good to me; how precious has he been to me this morning! I have been to Gethsemane, from thence to Calvary, from thence to the Sepulchre; in vain the soldiers watched or the stone was sealed, for He had power to lay down his life, and power to take it again. He

rose triumphant. O my dear friend," said he, "the battle is fought, the victory is won. I shall soon be with him," and

"Millions of years my wondering eyes
Shall o'er his beauties rove,
While endless ages I'll adore
The wonders of his love."

His conversation at this time was heavenly and divine. A few days after I called again to see him. He appeared to be not so lively; Satan had been permitted to assail him; still his hope was unshaken. He told me that he had had the curate to visit him a day or two before; and feeling the Lord precious, he began to talk of the sweet peace he enjoyed in resting in the blood and righteousness of Jesus and his finished work, as the Holy Ghost so sweetly revealed it unto him. "O," said this learned collegian, "you must not trust in this, it is dangerous." "Dear me!" said the old man, "what then must I trust in, if not in the finished work of Jesus?" "O," said he, "I shall call again and see you, and you must try and think of your many sins and shortcomings, and confess them to me." The poor man looked at him. "Sir," said he, "Jesus has put away my sins, and the work is completely finished, so that I have nothing to do with it; and it is no wonder you are a stranger to these things, having never experienced the new birth, without which you cannot understand them; and if you die in your present state, you cannot enter heaven." About three weeks before he died, being under a cloud, and distressed by Satan, he was led to wrestle with the Lord for a clearer manifestation, when the Lord spoke these words: "Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God." "Lord," said he, "it is enough." I called to see him again, when he looked upon his son and me, and said, "A little while, and ye shall not see me, because I go to the Father." "The sting of death is sin; the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who has given me, even me, the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." "I will walk through the valley of the shadow of death, and fear no evil," he said, "for thou art with me." He was often shouting, "Victory, victory, victory!" and in this sweet frame he continued as long as he was sensible. The last night of his life he was quite insensible, and towards the morning he quietly breathed his soul into the bosom of Jesus, on the 14th of February, 1850, in the eighty-second year of his age.

Yours truly,

Sutton Benger.

A SMOKING FLAX.

THE SPIRIT OF ADOPTION.

What a mercy it is that the Lord should look down upon such poor, helpless, empty, needy nothings as we are, and fit but to be cut down as cumberers of the ground! Yet the Lord does look upon such crooked things in the Lord Jesus, and beholds us all fair and without spot. And when he manifests his pity, love, and compassion unto our souls, how overcoming it is! How it breaks us

down at his dear feet, humbles our souls in the dust of self-abasement, and makes us abhor ourselves and repent in dust and ashes! Then it is that we can look back with astonishment, and cry out with John, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." It is then that our souls can look forward with "a good hope through grace," and believe that we are loved in the Lord Jesus with "an everlasting love," without a load of doubts and fears. And how sweet it is to be favoured with that love which "casteth out fear which hath torment!" It is then that our souls can run without weariness, and walk without fainting.

The dear Lord has been very gracious to my soul since my return from L———. The first Sabbath was a blessed day with my soul. The truth of God ran through my heart sweetly, and salvation by grace was a sweet subject to my poor, needy soul. The "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure," was sweetly opened up within my heart; and the power, virtue, and sweetness of it made my soul "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." A sinner saved by love, blood, and righteousness, was my song.

I had a sweet time at L——— on the Thursday morning before I left. The power of the Lord was within my heart. And what can such a poor, weak, helpless, empty, filthy, guilty, wandering, forgetful, carnal, lifeless, barren, stupid, foolish, ignorant thing say, when he feels anything of the Lord, but to praise and exalt the riches of his grace? And how my soul would lift him up if I had power and strength! "But when I would do good evil is present with me." But "he knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust." and never forgets that we are dust. But we ourselves forget it, and things of another nature are uppermost, such as pride and self-sufficiency; and we want to be something, when we are nothing but a mass of filth and confusion.

Then what a mercy it is for us that the Lord does know our frame, let us be in whatever state we may; that "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak;" and that it is the Lord which "worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure!" What pleasure there is in working *out* what the Lord works *in*! And when he draws near to our souls, then we can "draw near to him with a true heart, in full assurance of faith; having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water." Therefore, "let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised. And let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works; and not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more as we see the day approaching."

O my friend, to have the truth, life, power, grace, and love of God within one's heart, far exceeds all the riches, honours, pleasures, profits, and praise of this world. And I believe that the Lord has brought your soul, under divine teaching, to see, feel, and believe this to be a truth.

According to what I have heard you say, your soul has passed

through painful and trying paths of darkness, deadness, wretchedness, coldness, and temptations. Well, what a mercy it is for you that the Lord has led your soul through such an experience; because you have learned the power of divine grace in passing through these painful, cutting, and mortifying things! And your having tasted and handled these things, makes you a good hearer and a spiritual judge. Although these bitter things "are not joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." So that the very things which we cry out under, and say with poor old Jacob, "All these things are against us," these all work together for our souls' good and profit and for God's glory: "For all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." And you know, at times, that you are called out of darkness into his marvellous light, by the Spirit which he hath given you, which is the Spirit of adoption, crying, "Abba, Father!" And your soul cannot help crying, "Abba, Father!" "My Lord and my God!" Do not these words pass within your heart from time to time, even when your soul is under the cloud and under the power of sin in thought and in imagination? And do not these words: "O my God, do look upon me and subdue my sins?" And when your soul is under the power of temptation, do not these words pass within your soul, and sometimes come out of your lips: "O my Lord, do undertake for me! Do, my God, keep me! Do, my dear Lord and Saviour, deliver my soul!" So, you see, you did not mean to call him your Lord and your God, but you could not help it. And why? Because it is the voice of the Spirit of adoption within your heart, and divine faith laying its claim to its heavenly Parent. The Spirit of adoption cried out in David's soul, in Psalm xiii., "O Lord my God!" although his soul was in such a state of darkness, misery, death, and unbelief. But yet there was the little child crying to its heavenly Father. And again, look at poor Jonah in the fish's belly, in the bowels of the sea; yet the Spirit of adoption lays its claim to its God and Father. Although he said that he was cast out of God's sight, "Yet will I look again toward thy holy temple. The waters compassed me about even to the soul, the depth closed me roundabout, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever; yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God." So you see, my friend, we often judge according to appearance, instead of judging righteous judgment. Look at the Spirit of adoption in the man which was born blind, in the 9th chapter of John, when Jesus asked him and said, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" And the Spirit answered in the man, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" So you see the Spirit of adoption owned him to be Lord; and as soon as Jesus said, "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee," then the Spirit said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshipped him. "And they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth;" and "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."

So now you can see that it is not a mere fancy of the brain, but a

divine reality, the Spirit's work within the soul. Therefore be not discouraged because you have not such strong feelings of love and zeal as you once had; and because you have not so much manifested light and life as you had many years ago; for what the Lord the Spirit has done within you is for ever done. For the wise man saith, "I know that whatsoever God doth it shall be for ever." Nothing can be put to it by any man, nor anything taken from it by any devil or enemy; and God doth it, that men should fear before him.

Therefore, may the Lord send you help from the sanctuary, and strengthen your soul out of Zion, and carry you down to death in his arms, and afterwards receive you to glory; this is the desire of your unworthy friend.

Yours affectionately,

T. G.

Woburn, Nov. 30, 1849.

THE MEDITATION OF A BEGGAR.

As I was meditating on the rise of disobedience in our first parents, and thinking how disobedience ran from them through all Adam's posterity, and that in our fallen nature we have a will to do evil; and seeing the truth of that holy word that said, "On the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," as die they did, and we in them, and we must for ever have sunk without a remedy, in ourselves; then I said, "O Lord, I beseech thee to raise me out of self. Be not offended with me, but as this is a day set apart for worship, and through indisposition of body I am prevented from meeting in thy earthly courts, and being come to the time of the evening sacrifice, grant that the Spirit of all grace may take a live coal from off the altar, and enable me to commune with Him that mortal eyes have never seen. Lord, aforetime thou hast done this, till I have lost myself in thee, and in the ancient settlements of eternity, and heard thee say, 'Come up out of the wilderness, leaning on the Beloved of thy soul; shake thyself, and I will adorn thee fit to be seen by Him that is thy All; and he, even he, shall show thee things that must shortly come to pass.'" And hence it is that he says, "Have not I called thee as a woman grieved in spirit, and comforted thee, and given unto thee the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; yea, even songs of thanksgiving? and even now, at the time of the evening sacrifice, I say unto thee, Thy request is granted thee, for whosoever seeketh me shall find me, and walk with me in white raiment; and as thou hast long dwelt with them that hate peace, and hast confessed before the God of heaven, saying, I am not worthy, I say unto thee, Come up hither, and see what is prepared for all those that seek a country whose maker and builder is God." What astonishment do I feel when I think that God the Maker of all things, yea, even of the wicked for the day of evil, has looked down in his love and in his pity on one that may truly be said to be the least of all, yea, the worst of all!

But the Lord speaks, saying, "I have loved thee, yea, I have redeemed thee;" and I reply before him, "I am as one born out of due time." But the answer is, "It was in due time in God's account; therefore he says, "Thou hast confessed thy sins; I have forgiven thee; yea, I have levelled every mountain before thee, and called thee into the large room of gospel grace; and here I will anoint thy eyes to walk about Zion, and see how she is hemmed in, so that none is able to bring a charge against her." And here I petitioned him to grant me the Spirit's guidance, the blessed privilege of looking straight on, and gathering fruit from the Tree of Renown; which prompts me to say what beauty I see, when spiritual sight is given, in looking at Him that I ere long shall never look off; yea, I long to leave this clog of clay, to worship him in the new Jerusalem, where the inhabitants shall no more have a body of sin and death. No; for then life from the grand Fountain of life shall be for ever showing us new things; yes, and then we shall have no clog, we shall dive deeply into, and see clearly the mystery of redeeming love. When I feel the name of that dear Christ precious to me, what beauty I see in him! Yea, he is fair as the morning, and though I seldom name his name to be heard, yet I retire before him in secret, and pour out my soul before him in saying, "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" and sure I am there is none upon earth to be compared to him. No; he is the loving Friend of my soul; and here I must again return him thanks that the eternal counsel ran to make man a living soul, yes, even to live for ever and ever, and because a body did he prepare for his only begotten Son, whom he had ordained to bring up an elect body out of the ruins of the fall, to do him homage, and that even my worthless soul should be amongst them; and here it is that I say, "Lord, lead on, and I will follow after." A life of righteousness in the soul is a secret thing, yea, even a thing that none but God can see.

Yes, thousands of times when I have been fasting before God, with my soul bowed down, there has not a word escaped my lips of the soul-trouble which I have had to wade through to the nearest friend on earth. Thus I have entered into my closet, and shut every thing within it from the sight of any mortal, and poured out my whole soul before the God of heaven; and now he saith, "I will reward thee openly." Yes, it is the only boon I wish, to be enabled to enter into Christ by a living faith; which brings to my mind that holy precept that saith, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto thee." And, again, it brings things to my mind when I communed with him from off the mercy seat, when he said, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" How my soul does him homage for his kind condescension! And though he has taken his way in the whirlwind, yet praises for ever crown his holy head!

God be thanked that he has given me eyes to look to that holy scene that shall for ever cause my soul to sing a new song unto him. Yes, I bless his name for that secret solemn worship that I feel before him. Who can know it but that number which no man can number save the Man at his right hand? Yes, I have praised a God near at hand and not afar off; yes, I bless him as a God of providence. Who know-

eth the worth of our God but those that have proved him in the way I have? Yes, I have many times, with good Hezekiah, taken my case into the house of prayer, and there spread it before him as the king did his letter, by prayer and deep supplication, imploring the God of heaven to appear for me, and pleading his own promise, even the promise that aforetime the Spirit of his grace had sealed home on my soul; and though the enemy has thrust hard at me, yet, I speak it to his honour, he has been a God near at hand, though I have many times believed his hand was gone out against me. But He who is seated on a throne of majesty and might does his work like a God, and he knoweth those that put their trust in him; and as the Lord liveth I have no where else to trust. For God the Spirit flies on the wings of the heavenly wind, wafted by the will of God in Christ Jesus, and puts words in my mouth when the enemy, in my feelings, has chained me down to earthly things; and here I am bound and fettered, saying, "Who shall deliver me out of this dungeon?" But as soon as "all-prayer" is in exercise it in a moment bursts through every thing that stands in the way. And this is not empty words; no, but for the greatest part groans that cannot be uttered. Thus while many are saying, "Who will show us any good?" I am worshipping the three-one undivided Jehovah. And if you ask me how I know, my answer is, Because I have learnt of the Father his holiness and his strict justice against sin and sinners. Why, there is such a chain of meditation, when one is led into it by the Spirit, that one is at a loss to word it as fast as it comes; and every link of this chain runs so one into the other, and all centre in such sweet harmony, that it is the most delightful employ any mortal can have; and thus it is that one's tongue is like the pen of a ready writer. God be praised that I know anything about it. Why, that great God has shown me his holiness till I have become lost to every thing but wonder at his greatness; and, anon, he showed me by that holy sword of his, that he would cut down all that were not hemmed in the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure.

Beloved, I long to worship him without a veil between; but he says, Look, and see Him that bowed his holy head, and died on the cross, the sword entering into his side to pass by thee. O that dear Lord, I do him homage; and thus it is written that the true worshippers worship God in spirit. Yes, he is the only Object of worship; indeed, he is very God, and his name is as ointment poured forth, for in his name I can address the Majesty of Heaven, even in this mortal state, and be heard; as it is written, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Thus I have often thought that if any one were to ask me my occupation, I should be obliged to say, A beggar. And thus it was in days of old: "The beggar died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom." The Lord is no respecter of persons, but in every nation, kindred, and tongue, they that work righteousness shall be accepted by him.

GOD'S ARM OF POWER ALL-SUFFICIENT FOR HIS SAINTS.

BY THE LATE H. FOWLER.

"Be thou their arm every morning."—ISAIAH xxxiii. 2.

God's arm implies power. God's people stand in need of his power every morning, yea, all the day. "Who is this that cometh up out of the wilderness, leaning on her Beloved?" Who is it? Not the world; for they are going down the wilderness; they want not the arm of another; they know not their own weakness. Nothing is more common than to see and hear men who are in the flesh boasting of their capacity to will and to do that which is acceptable to God. How different is the language of those who are taught of God! Such tremble at their own weakness, and are often afraid of themselves: they know they are not sufficient of themselves either to do or think any thing that is good; consequently, they want an arm to lean upon; and such an arm has Christ. "He gathers the lambs with his arm:" and when gathered, holds them fast in his hand. "My sheep shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." The whole of the saints' security depends on the arm of the eternal God; if he were to remove his arm, fall we must. From the first beam of divine light to the last, we are borne up by the arm of God; and every-child of God may say, "I was cast upon thee from the womb." It is said of Israel, "He took them by their arms; but they knew not that he healed them. I drew them with the cords of a man, with bands of love; and I was unto them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them." Even so it is now with God's spiritual Israel; his arm first brought them salvation. He brings them out of "darkness and the shadow of death, and breaks their bands in sunder."

In the regeneration of a sinner, God's arm is remarkably seen. No man can quicken his own soul; this is exclusively the work of omnipotent power, and is accomplished instrumentally by the word of his gospel. "Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth." Men may turn from one form of religion to another, and back again to the first, and then give all religion up and turn deists, because God was not the author of their religion; but the water that Christ gives unto his elect shall be "in them a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." The anointing which they receive of him shall be in them and abide. The unclean spirit may go out of a man, and the man's house may be swept and garnished; he may live for a time a sober, moral life, till the unclean spirit returns again and enters into him; for if the unclean spirit go out without being driven out by the arm of God, he may return again; and the last state of that man will be worse than the first, because he has more work to stifle conscience, and his religious knowledge is generally attended with greater enmity against the truth: "For it had been better for him not to have known the way of righteousness, than after he has known it to turn from that holy commandment which was delivered unto him."

But the saints receive their religion from God; it is not of flesh

and blood, but by the revelation of the Father, who always in the end leads them to Christ, as the only centre of rest. For this purpose were they quickened: "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sins;" and are born, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." In them is fulfilled God's gracious promise: "The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." (Isaiah lii. 10.)

The glorious work of God's power must go on according to the good pleasure of his will, till every elect vessel of mercy is effectually called. Jehovah will never be defeated in his designs; every period shall unfold his hidden wisdom and prove his firm decrees. Every doctrine that represents God as liable to disappointment in the accomplishment of his eternal purposes, is a solemn mockery of his majesty. Or, to talk of God's power as waiting for the sinner's compliance before it can be effectual to his salvation, is an arrant falsehood, and a burlesque on the Almighty and his word: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power;" "All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me, and him that cometh I will in no wise cast out." Every regenerated soul is taught to lean on God's arm, which is Christ. (See Isaiah liii. 1.) His arm brings salvation, being all-powerful, to his elect children. "The gospel is the power of God for salvation unto every one that believeth." My soul, it was God's arm, and not thine, that brought thee salvation. He took thee and drew thee out of many deep waters of soul-trouble, and made thee depend entirely on himself for righteousness and strength. As thou hast received him, so walk in him; and, above all things, reject an arm of flesh: "Cursed is the man who trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the living God."

The arm of God is conspicuously seen in the maintenance of divine life in the hearts of his children. Every child of God has to carry about with him a body of sin and death, which makes him deeply groan, being burdened: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But groaning implies life; where there is no life there can be no groans. This proves the power of God's arm amidst all the powerful corruptions of the human heart, which was Paul's body of sin; and every putting forth of God's arm gains us a victory over the old man: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Every act of faith is produced by the power of God. The faith of God's elect stands, "not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." The catalogue of the faithful ones and their feats, recorded in Hebrews xi., is a striking account of God's powerful operations, written more to set forth his glory than his people's excellency. And this every sent servant of God should well observe, and not rob the Master of his honour by attributing this and that to the effect instead of the cause: "They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom." (Psalm cxlv. 11, 12.)

Jehovah tells Zion that her Maker is her husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name. Paul says that the head of the woman is the man; therefore, for the woman to usurp authority over the man, is to invert the order which God has established. We are taught by this our subjection to, and our entire dependance on Christ, our heavenly Husband. Wouldst thou, ransomed sinner, walk safely and comfortably to heaven, and enjoy comfort by the way? Then thou must lay hold of the arm of thy Husband, Christ. If thou faintest, he fainteth not, neither is he weary. We read of Samson, that such were his zeal and strength, that he slew thousands with the jaw-bone of an ass. But this was typical of Christ, who with his strong arm "spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Samson also slew a host and died in the struggle; so did Jesus, but after three days revived us by raising up himself: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again; he spake of the temple of his body." Now the children of God were raised up together with him, virtually, and are made to "sit together with him in heavenly places in Christ." Jesus, as king in Zion, bears the sword and sways the sceptre, and will reign till all enemies be put beneath his feet. Believer, the arm of Christ is as powerful as ever it was; he is able to save us out of the hands of our enemies, that we may serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. "Behold! the Lord's hand is not shortened that he cannot save, neither is his ear heavy that he cannot hear." My soul, he is both able and willing to defend thee from all the dire assaults of thy grand adversary, Satan, and to preserve thee safe to his heavenly kingdom: "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty! with thy glory and majesty; and in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things." (Psalm xlv. 3, 4.)

My God, thy gracious arm, thy matchless power,
 Shall gird my soul in every trying hour.
 Thy mercies new each morning I shall want;
 Without thine arm and mercy, Lord, I faint.
 Thou knowst that in myself I nothing am
 But sin and death, and what I dare not name.
 Permit a worm to lean upon thine arm,
 And let thy speech my cold affections warm.
 Thus gird me, keep me, all my journey through,
 And prove thy word of promise firm and true.
 And when on me thou dost bestow the crown,
 I'll sound aloud thy glory and renown.

BY IT HE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH.

No. VII.

Most affectionate Friend,—In reading your truly kind and sympathizing letter, I could not but wonder at and admire the condescension of the Lord Jesus, in bringing to your mind, and enabling you to bear such a poor, guilty, worthless, and polluted sinner before the mercy-seat, where the dear Lord hears and answers the petitions of his wrestling Jacobs and prevailing Israels.

O my dear friend, since my last confused note I have had to drink of the cup of sorrows, in soul-affliction, dejection, and deep despondings, "despairing even of life," fearing and questioning if even one spark of spiritual life had been communicated to my soul, my heart night and day swarming with the vilest sins, and raging enmity boiling in, yea, and out of it. O the long-suffering of God towards me his guilty, guilty worm!

Last Saturday evening, I felt a poor, lost, bewildered creature, and thought of wandering to some wood on the Sabbath, instead of going to chapel; but on the Sunday morning, as I lay before the Lord, these words were applied to my heart: "The poor hath hope;" and, to the praise of his dear name, that brought some relief to my poor guilty, despairing soul. I had some sweet kindlings of love and softening of soul throughout part of the day, but sank down again before I went to bed; got up the same on Monday morning, with these words on my mind: "From day even to night wilt thou make an end of me;" when shortly after the Lord enabled me to approach the mercy-seat, and to pour out my soul before him, when I humbly trust I realized the sweetness of that promise: "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength." I felt a spirit of prayer through the day, and was sensibly refreshed and strengthened.

I have felt much depressed in spirit this day, perhaps in measure from the state of my body, having had some little return of spitting of blood, and feeling my health in such an uncertain state, and business a burden to attend to. A daily cross I must expect. May the dear Lord "sanctify the pain," else I cannot say,

"Tis my happiness below,
Not to live without the cross."

O no! my heart murmurs and frets beneath the weight; and yet, my dear friend, in my sober mind I would not be without the cross; and as I have lately felt, I should be one of the proudest and most presumptuous of men without it. O! I feel to need continually humiliating and bruising discoveries of my wretched heart, to lay me and keep me low, as a poor sinner. Do not think it presuming, then, writing to me. O no, it is a mercy to have a little communion with those so taught of the Lord, when we can say, "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." I have felt so with you in many particulars; O that I could in the sweetest!

I often feel my path and experience peculiar when compared with that of most whom I speak with, which often makes me sigh and feel alone; but, bless the Lord, there are one or two that I have the deepest and unfeigned sympathy with. This I feel to be a gift. To "weep with those that weep," &c., is not in our own power to exercise.

And now, my dear friend, that the best of blessings may rest upon you and the worthless dust addressing you; and that the Lord would pour out a spirit of supplication upon us for each other's spiritual welfare, and that of his dear tried and afflicted family, is the prayer of your most unworthy and affectionate friend,

October 9th.

THOS. COPELAND.

THEY SHALL STILL BRING FORTH FRUIT IN OLD AGE.

My dear aged Brother in Christ,—Grace and peace be multiplied to thee from the Fountain-head above, through the blood and merits of Immanuel, received by faith and enjoyed within, with all the blessed effects produced thereby.

Your kind note I should have replied to before, but have not had time. We were glad to hear from you once more, for the dew of heaven resteth upon thee above many. We also feel thankful that your health is better than when you wrote; and we hope it continues so, if it be the Lord's will.

You and I are now drawing nearer and nearer our heavenly home, though I am not *quite* so far stricken in years as you. You are past the age allotted to mortals, and I am fast advancing that way. The Lord has loosened your affections and mine too from the beggarly elements of this sinful and vain world, and is ripening us for glory, as it is written: "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear."

As in nature, so in grace: the blade springs up and is the first appearance of life, though the plant had life before it was seen above the soil; but its appearance made it manifest.

The soul is quickened into newness of life by God the Holy Ghost, in Jehovah's own appointed moment, unheard, unseen, and unknown by mortals. Then is the sinner, dead before in trespasses and sins, born again, born of the Spirit, made alive in Christ Jesus; then the life of God, and the consequence of that immortal life, springs up within and makes itself manifest to others, and in time to himself, to be the work of God, by signs and wonders following. Here God hath made us his witnesses in very deed. Divine life and light spring up in the soul together—life to feel our real state before God as transgressors of his holy law, and light to see the dreadful end that awaits all who live and die under the law as a covenant of works. O the fearful trembling which took hold upon me when God thus revealed his law in my conscience! My downcast looks, my sighs, my groans, my attendance at prayer meetings and to hear the preaching of God's word, could not but make me noticed; but feeling the terrors of God within, all mattered nothing to me. Refuge, Refuge! I secretly cried in my sorrowful mind, as I pressed forward. Lost for ever, was pictured before mine eyes; yet a "Who can tell" still bore me up, till all refuges failed me, and I cried, "Lord, save, or I perish;" then a secret hand drew me into the feeling embrace of the bleeding heart of a precious Christ, banished all my fears, and gave me joy and peace in believing.

"O Satan, now I'm safe, I cried,
Salvation's full and free;
Christ is my Refuge; here I'll hide,
He bled, he died for me."

Thus was I made manifest to Israel, as it is written, "First the

blade, then the ear." In nature, or creation, the ear is that part of the plant which grows above the blade, and contains the corn or seed. So it is in grace; the children of God are said to be plants of their heavenly Father's right hand planting, the Husbandman, and Christ himself and his spiritual church the place where they are planted. His will is, that those who bear fruit should bear more fruit; for this end and purpose he prunes them, purges them, and tries them as gold is tried. waters them with the dew of heaven, and keeps them reserved to himself, for and as his own special care, charge, use, and purpose. The fruits they bear, when they bear fruit unto God, are the fruits of the Spirit, as set forth in his word. As it is written, "then the ear."

The ear takes in and comprises that part of a Christian's life from his delivery from Egyptian bondage, as before stated, to the period of his ripening for eternal glory. This in some is a longer period, in others a short one, according to the sovereign will, good pleasure, and all-wise designs and purposes of Israel's covenant, gracious God. In each case it is a life of changes; sinning and repenting, repenting and sinning; a life of conflict, labour, trial, and sorrow; a life of fighting, wrestling, dying, and living; a life of hoping and fearing; a life of receiving and giving; a life of faith on the Son of God; a life of communion with Jesus; a life of trusting in, hoping in, and relying upon him; a life of coming to him; of trembling for fear of offending him; of living, serving, obeying, and desiring to glorify him in the world and the church; a life which neither death, nor sin, nor hell can ever extinguish, nor floods quench, nor fires consume; immortal life, the life of God within. O how blessed, how blessed it is, my dear brother, thus to feel and prove that we have this life in our souls, by thus bearing the fruits of the Spirit, the end of which will be life everlasting!

I have borne much fruit to the flesh I know, and do so still, to my grief and sorrow of heart, and do reap corruption in consequence thereof. I am also at length, through the help and teaching of the Holy Ghost, come to a settled, feeling persuasion that I bear fruit unto God, the fruits of the Spirit, and that the end thereof will be blessed, even everlasting life; as it is written, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

Every groan, and sigh, and desire, and act, and deed, caused by the influence of divine grace within, are the fruits of the Spirit; the effect produced is a proof thereof. The fruits of the flesh rise no higher than self and self-applause, and gender bondage and corruption. But the fruits of the Spirit ascend to God, endear and honour his holy name; and work life, liberty, love, joy, and peace, immortal and divine, in the soul. Hence we may judge whether we bear fruit to God or not, by the effects; and until a soul can, in some good measure, distinguish between flesh and spirit, and the operation of these two natures within him, he cannot be much established in divine things. And until he has endured many wintry and spring tide seasons, and been blown about with many storms and tempests, and received strength, support, help, and comfort

from above, again and again, and felt again and again the dew of heaven distilling on his branch, he cannot take sufficient root downward, sufficient depth in and hold of Christ, to make him "steadfast, immovable" in the faith, or to bear much fruit upward to the glory of God. But when, by reason of these things and having his senses exercised, and having through a long series of afflictions, troubles, changes, sorrows, crosses, disappointments, miseries, and woes, been tried to the quick, when thus through all-sufficient grace he is brought to a firm, solid, settled, comfortable resting by faith in Jesus, then, at all times and in all states, cases, and circumstances, is that blessed saying verified, to the glory of God and his own soul's peace, comfort, and joy, namely, "It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace." This I have also proved by experience, and am a witness for God that it is true. Thus are the ears now turning to "the full corn in the ear."

What a pleasing sight is this to behold in nature, but more especially in grace! In nature we see the ears, laden with grain, turning yellow and ripening; in consequence of the sun's genial rays, the gentle summer breezes and rains, and the silent nocturnal dews, for harvest; and bending downward with fruit, in lofty majesty, they seem to invite the reaper's sickle and kind aid to gather them into the prepared garner. So in grace. The dear aged saint we notice full of days and laden with heavenly fruit, bending downward toward the tomb, and looking forward to the rest prepared for him above, without fear of death, composed, serene, and sometimes joyful in the Lord; full of infirmities, weakness, pains, and sorrow, because he cannot cease from sin and from grieving his heavenly Lord and Friend, but hoping to cease from sin and all its painful effects ere long, and to be with Christ his best Beloved for ever; esteeming all things here below "vanity of vanities," and but "dung and dross, that he may win Christ, and be found in him." He has passed through many changes, many trials, many dangers, many sorrows, many days and nights of darkness, of mourning, fear, and distress; but now he stands on the borders of the grave, and sings in heavenly triumph, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped me." Many wonders of God in the deep he has seen, but he longs to see the greatest wonder of all, himself in the embraces of Jesus above. Many conflicts he has had with sin, Satan, and the world; and he fears not entering into and engaging in the last conflict with death. Many victories he has gained and sung of, through the Lamb and his blood, on earth; but his soul hastens to gain the last victory over death, hell, and sin, and join the conquerors' song, in endless triumph, and to cast his crown of victory at his precious Redeemer's feet, with theirs, before the Eternal Throne in glory, and see his face unveiled, and sing his praise for ever and ever. In all his pains, troubles, cares, and miseries, he is saying within himself, "Thank God, that leaves one less in the number allotted for me; and the joy prepared for suffering saints will soon make me amends for all." Then he cries out, "O that I were safe landed in my Father's house, my heavenly home, far beyond this beggarly, sinful world and Jordan's swelling flood!

for earth is too mean for me, not worth my longer stay: 'nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done;' since for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

O what a blessed closing of mortal life is this! A hoary head found in the ways of righteousness is a crown of glory. O how favoured would God's church be, were there many such fathers in Christ, more than there are, to encompass her altar about, and strive to prevail with God on Zion's account!

All hail, my aged brother! Peace to thee. My life is not so dear unto me as is the desire I feel to be found, with thee, among the highly favoured number. This experience of the fathers I have also written from my own. O full corns in the ear, bowing down with age and fruit, ripe for glory eternal, and ready for the reaper's hand! Victorious warriors under the blood-stained banner of the Lamb, of whom the world is not worthy! Plants of our heavenly Father's right hand planting! The specially beloved and favoured people of God! "O Naphtali, satisfied with favour." Lord, thus satisfy me and every quickened, longing soul, and gather us to thyself at last; then shall I and thy dear mourning children be quite satisfied, and not before.

The Lord be with you, to smooth your passage to the tomb and crown your journey's end.

Yours affectionately in Jesus,

G. T. C.

Bedworth, February 20th, 1850.

A JUST GOD AND A SAVIOUR.

My dear Friend and Brother in the path of sorrow,—“Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning;” which you know by bitter experience on the one hand, and by sweet experience on the other. And these are to go together in the church of the living God to the end of the world: for “by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit.” Yes, my friend, I am at a point in my own mind about this, whatever men may say. “To the law and to the testimony;” it is this by which we must stand or fall. And if our religion will stand this test it is of God; but if it will not, we shall be found wanting. Sometimes I am willing it should be so, and think that I shall be found right at the last; but it is when I feel a little of the mercy of the Lord made manifest to my soul that I say I am willing it should be so, that is, that the law and the testimony should decide the case.

I am happy to say that they seem to be on my side: and then I am strengthened in my soul and encouraged to go on, hoping that it will be well with me while I live, and when I die too. But one thing I can tell you, at least it is so with me, that the way to enjoy the presence of the Lord is through a dark scene of things in the soul. I am often at a stand in my poor mind, as to a real work of grace being carried on in my soul; for I feel so blind and surrounded

with darkness, felt darkness, that I do not know what to make of myself. And if it were left for me to decide, I should be in a poor state indeed. I know so much of darkness of mind and confusion of soul, that I am led to cry out, "I know not how to order my speech before thee, by reason of the darkness that surrounds me;" which makes me to say in my feelings, "O send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me."

And yet, my friend, notwithstanding darkness, sorrows, temptations, guilt, distress, storms, tempests, and waves of trouble, the seas running high, which has been the case with me many a time, here I am, still spared, and I hope a monument of the rich mercy of a covenant God. And I can say from my heart sometimes, and now I am not without feeling, that "it is of the Lord's mercy I am not consumed, because his compassions fail not," and for no other reason than that; but that is enough. O yes, this subject is dear to my heart and precious to my soul. Without this I am undone for ever; therefore God in his mercy sends light for the righteous and gladness for the upright in heart, that they may be able to see whether they are in the path he has called them to travel in. And "truly light is sweet" to the way-worn traveller, by which he is led to see the good hand of the Lord, that "brought him out of darkness into his marvellous light;" which makes him feel his strength renewed like the eagle's, and to sing for joy of heart. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, for his merciful kindness" to me, in that he has again lifted upon me "the light of his countenance, and put gladness into my heart more than in the time when their corn and their wine increased." Light to a poor soul that knows what real darkness is, is more desirable than all this world has in it. Yes, my friend, it is; and to say with David, "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?" is a blessing which all the riches in the world can never yield.

"Solid joys and lasting pleasures,
None but Zion's children know."

And I believe I have known what it is to have long nights of sorrow; but have been made to wait, and in feeling say, "My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they that watch for the morning;" and I have ever found that the Lord in mercy has appeared for my help, to make darkness light before me and crooked things straight; and it is added, "These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

"Is there any God like the God of Israel?" No, not any; therefore, "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God!" O the goodness of the Lord in helping, blessing, separating, and delivering his people out of those places from which no other than a God mighty to save could deliver! But "the prey must be taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive delivered;" and, my friend, God gets honour and fame to his great and solemn name: "I will bless the Lord at all times, his praise shall continually be in my mouth." That is, when the Lord is pleased to bring my poor soul out of trouble

Many professors laugh if we talk about grace; and I suppose the reason is because they are strangers to it and know nothing at all about it. They can pray, and read the Bible, and take the sacrament, be comfortable and happy, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Yes, their strength is firm; but I believe it is *their* strength and no other. It is not being "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." No; this God's people have to wait for, and they cannot help themselves; and in the simplicity of their hearts they cry out, "I am shut up, and cannot come forth!" Shut up in reading the word of God, in prayer, in meditation, in preaching; and if the poor sinner tries to look back, all is dark and gloomy, and he is made feelingly to know that if he is ever brought forth, it must be the Lord God of hosts that must appear for his help. And he will too; for he has said, "I will work, and who shall let it?" for "it is God which worketh in you to will and to do of his own good pleasure," working salvation in the hearts of his people by his blessed Spirit.

Again, Christ has said, "He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you:" without which we could never see the beauties of Christ, or feel his preciousness as the Friend of sinners, their Advocate on high. And yet he is Jesus Christ the Righteous. O what a mercy is this! A just God and a Saviour; and he that is the Friend of sinners, sensible sinners, has all power in heaven and on earth; this the poor soul knows, and it encourages him to come to the throne of grace, and there he "obtains mercy, and finds grace to help in time of need." Yes, poor soul, "Jesus is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him!" This the blessed Spirit will and does testify to the hearts of poor sinners while there is one who needs comfort in this vale of tears. He will show the love of Christ in "dying, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring them to God;" and he will reveal the blood and righteousness of the Lamb of God to the heart and conscience of poor perishing sinners, and say, "Let them drink and forget their poverty, and remember their misery no more."

T. C.

Bury.

PAUPERS' FARE.

Dear Friend,—Yours came safely to hand, and I was glad to find you still holding on your way, leaning on the Beloved, who has never failed to be our Helper, our Protector, our Supplier, and our Deliverer to the present day. Yes, and my soul is very strong and very confident at times that he will keep and guide me even unto death, and afterwards receive me to glory.

O what a blessing to have communion with the dear Jesus, telling him of our helplessness and worthlessness, and entreating him to be with us, stand by us, defend us, supply us, and never to leave us a moment to ourselves! And how sweet to hear his gracious words whispered in our hearts: "I will be with thee in six troubles,

and in the seventh will not leave thee;" "I will go before thee, and bring up the rearward;" and, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."

We can then enter a little into what David said: "The law of thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver;" "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters; he restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, for his name's sake;" "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance; and of my cup thou maintainest my lot;" "The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage."

We can say with the prophet Isaiah, "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us; for thou also hast wrought all our works in us. O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name;" "The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effects of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings and quiet resting-places, when it shall hail, coming down in the forest, and the city shall be low in a low place. Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass." "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree; and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree; and it shall be unto the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

Your soul and mine, though we are so unworthy, have found his words precious hundreds of times. And we have not only found them, but have eaten them, and proved them to be the joy and rejoicing of our hearts. O the blessedness and sweetness of his lips when he whispers in our hearts, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Bless the Lord, we have proved again and again that the kingdom of God is not meat or drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. And we are living witnesses by felt experience in our hearts, that "the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Against such there is no law." O that your soul and mine may have more of the fruits of the blessed Spirit in lively exercise in our hearts. God Almighty grant it! What is all the talk and contention about religion without this? Nothing at all. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

What a mercy it is that we are poor paupers upon charity! We

have to come from week to week, from month to month, and from year to year, wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, and knock at charity's door, having no other place where we can obtain relief or a supply for our need. And bless the Lord's dear name, all blessing is stored up in charity, free, "without money and without price." This just suits such poor beggars as you and I, who know and feel ourselves totally destitute of anything that can help us. And we are obliged to come again with the old tale, "Lord, have mercy upon me;" "Let thy salvation lift me up on high;" "Keep me as the apple of thine eye;" "Hide me under the shadow of thy wing, from the wicked that oppress me, from the deadly enemies who compass me about;" "Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer; from the ends of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the Rock that is higher than I; for thou hast been a shelter to me, and a strong tower from my enemy;" "Thou hast been mine help, leave me not, O God of my salvation;" "Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort;" "O Lord, show me one more token for good, that they which hate me may see it, and be ashamed because thou, Lord, hast holpen me and comforted me."

And here my soul is obliged to wait, and to watch charity's own time to communicate; and sometimes it is so long before charity appears to take any notice, or give any answer to my request, that I begin to sink with fear that I have quite wearied him out, and shall never again be relieved. But having no where else to go for help, I am obliged to keep crying and knocking on, till by and by the door is opened, and a hearty welcome given me: "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord!" "Wisdom hath builded her house; she hath hewed out her seven pillars; she hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine, she hath also furnished her table; she hath sent forth her maidens, she crieth upon the highest places of the city, Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither; as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled; forsake the foolish and live, and go in the way of understanding."

O what a delicious feast, for poor, famishing beggars to feast upon electing love, imputed righteousness, and atoning blood! We have proved, my friend, that "his flesh is meat indeed and his blood drink indeed." We know it, for we have experienced the sweetness of it. It has cheered our heavy hearts; it has made us forget our poverty, and swept away our misery. God says, "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy name; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." And sweet drinking it is. We can then sing, and say—not because it is in the written word, but because it is in our hearts—"There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God."

O the wondrous pleasure, gladness, and joy in beholding and admiring charity in God the Father—in his electing love, in the gift of his dear Son, in imputing all our accursed sins to him, and in preparing a home for us when all our begging is ended—a home of

which neither hell nor Satan can deprive us, for it is "reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

And what unspeakable pleasure in beholding charity in God the Son—in taking our nature into union with his divine, being born of a woman, and "made under the law, that he might redeem those that are under the law!" What wondrous charity that he should condescend to suffer, bleed, and die for our sins, conquer our enemies, bear all our burdens, and make a way to eternal glory for all poor beggars!

And what heart-breaking and soul-melting charity in the Holy Ghost, to stop us from going to hell, strip us of the filthy rags of our own righteousness, and adorn us with the robe of wrought gold; emptying us of all trumpery, fleshly idols, and enriching us with his humbling, drawing, comforting, establishing, holy, anointing unction! He brings down our high looks, that we may experience his mighty exalting power. He suffers the cursed enemies of our souls to come in like a flood, so that sometimes we can only just say, "Let not the pit shut her mouth upon me," that he may exalt his glory in lifting up a standard against him. And he brings our souls out of the miry clay, that we may sing a song of praise to Him to whom all praise belongs: "He brought me up out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings, and put a new song into my mouth, even praise unto our God."

Bless the Lord, "Charity never faileth."

But where am I running to?

Yours in love,

J. W.

Trowbridge, Sept. 16, 1847.

HE DOTHT NOT AFFLICT WILLINGLY, NOR GRIEVE THE CHILDREN OF MEN

My dear Friend,—Since I sent my last letter to you, I have been passing through a severe and trying ordeal, which is the cause of my long silence.

God in his wisdom has seen fit to give me many draughts of bitters, from which I have not been able to escape. I suppose he sees a necessity for my present adversity, or he would order things differently for me. For some time past my temporal trials have been severe. And in addition to those things that are without, darkness has rested upon my soul, and I have found no comforter; for according to my apprehensions, "He that should relieve my soul was far from me." (Lam. i. 16.)

Under the combined influence of this twofold trial, I sank deep into the pit of despondency. I cried unto the Lord, but for the time being he refused to answer me. No sweet promise came to cheer me. No cordial to revive my drooping spirits. I tried to comfort myself with the remembrance of past deliverances. but the attempt failed. The recollection of the past was like a dream, and like a

dream it vanished, being insufficient to support my soul in the furnace of affliction.

Satan, beholding my forlorn condition, added grief to my sorrow by enumerating the numerous obstacles strewed in my path, and the improbability of a deliverance being granted unto me. This has caused me to weep and mourn over what I considered my misfortunes, until the source of weeping seemed exhausted. I then wept for weeping, and cried for tears, that I might give vent to the grief pent up in my heart. This has been succeeded by a sullen reserve; after which, I have generally manifested the rebellion of my heart to a degree which I choose to conceal rather than attempt to describe. Such has been the influence of these things upon me, that my body has been violently agitated with the rockings to and fro of my mind. I have found no passage in the word of God so descriptive of my condition as the following pathetic moan, recorded in the Book of Job: "My bowels boiled and rested not. The days of affliction prevented me. I went mourning without the sun. I stood up and I cried in the congregation, I am a brother to dragons and a companion to owls." (Job xxx. 27—29.)

When comfortably situated both in providence and grace, how prone we are to look upon the trials and conflicts recorded by the pen of inspiration as a mere narration of certain wonderful events which took place in those bygone days, but with which we are totally unconnected! And such is the callousness which a state of ease produces, that we feel almost as unconcerned. When God, however, lays his chastening hand upon us, it causes us to look well to the ways of our feet; and we learn those things in the school of adversity which cannot be learned in the day of prosperity, when the Sun of Righteousness in his meridian splendour is shining upon our tabernacle. In my judgment, I admit the necessity of the furnace, and am sensible that many rampant weeds of nature stand prominent in me, requiring the pruning knife of the heavenly Husbandman to sever them close to the stem; and of late the effects of the pruning knife and furnace combined I have bitterly felt. And though I feel persuaded that God does not afflict willingly, (Lam. iii. 33,) nor lay upon me more than is needful for my spiritual good, yet I shrink from the conflict, nature trembles for the issue, and in the bitterness of my grief I cry out, "Deliver me, I beseech thee, O Lord; save me for thy name and mercies' sake, for I am brought very low."

But though I have thus sunk deep in the waters of adversity, I have not been left destitute of hope. I have had a hope abiding with me which has borne the burden and the heat of the day, and has out-riden the storms and the tempests which have fallen upon me; but this has not comforted me. Such has been the disorder of my mind, that I have quarrelled with myself for hoping. Ah! says unbelief, it is all deception; the thing hoped for will never be realized. But that hope which is a fruit of the Eternal Spirit rests not upon outward appearances, probabilities, or improbabilities. It centres in its Divine Author, and rests upon his faithfulness; while faith believes that what God has promised he will surely perform.

Two things have tended very much to support me and strengthen me during this process. One is the Lord's faithfulness to me during my past pilgrimage in this wilderness of sin. I cannot remember one instance of his ever forsaking me; but ultimately on every occasion he has delivered me. The other circumstance alluded to is this. I cannot find one instance recorded in the whole Bible of the Lord ever forsaking his people. If there were one instance, it would lay the foundation for Satan's everlasting triumph; while a poor weak creature like myself would be overwhelmed with despair. This encourages me still to hope; and I am now raised from that state of gloom and dejection which for some time past has so severely oppressed me. I feel a crumbling down into the hands of the Lord. My eyes are looking up unto him, and the language of my soul is, "Father, may thy will be done," hoping he will give me strength to bear patiently whatever he sees fit to lay upon me, as I know and believe, when in my right mind, that he will ever consider my good in all his proceedings. But such is my weakness, that I feel afraid of being left without the comforting and supporting presence of my best Friend. I tremble at the idea of again sinking in the pit from which I have partially escaped; but the Lord's will be done. And I have no doubt that both you and I shall see the wisdom and goodness of the Lord displayed in his present dealings with us, to a degree which as yet we have not attained to, in consequence of the darkness of our minds. However, I can say, that the glory of God and the good of his people lie close to my heart.

I fear you will find this a gloomy epistle; but such as it is I send it to you. It is a feeble description of the Lord's dealings with me; and as you are not a stranger to the good old way, it will not be despised by you. I should like to hear from you. Remember me kindly to the friends whom I love in the truth; while I remain

Your affectionate fellow-traveller,

W. S.

R——, 1850.

WITHOUT ME YE CAN DO NOTHING

My dear Friend,—Your kind letter, dated 29th August, I duly received, and was very glad to hear from you. An interchange of thoughts between friends, under the blessing of the Lord, is beneficial and encouraging. Such I have found to be the effect produced on my mind by your letters; and I tell you this that you may be encouraged to write whenever your inclination and opportunity serve. I wish I could spur myself on to be more fond of handling my pen, but I find even this to be beyond my reach: I cannot attain to it. Feelings of barrenness, self-indulgence, ease, and pride lest I should write what is not worth reading, are oftentimes great hindrances to me in this respect.

In our correspondence we never can be destitute of a subject while we taste the goodness of God, and feel and groan under the desperate

wickedness of our hearts. These two realities must be known and felt, or there is no life in our letter-writing, our conversation, our meditation, our prayers, our reading of God's word, or in any of the means of grace.

Your high Calvinist friend says, "It is wrong to mistrust the Lord after being called by grace." I say so too, for herein lies much of my burden and grief. O how bravely I would live if I could! Think you I should be always floundering in nature's slough, or living so much in "Lumber lane" if I could help it? No, no; I should be faithful as Abraham, dependent as Joseph, meek as Moses, valiant as Joshua, patient as Job, suppliant as David, bold as Peter, zealous as Paul, and loving as John; in short, I should be always walking in the fear of the Lord, fulfilling every one of his precepts, complying with every exhortation, rejoicing and triumphing in Christ, and glorifying God with all the powers of my body, soul, and spirit. But I do not, and I cannot. I have a certain principle in my flesh that is a foe to God and goodness, and hates and abominates all spiritual things. This principle will never be altered, nor can it rise above its level; and my misery is that I am so much in bondage to it. It is a hard master, and so dire and deadening are its fruits, that I daily hang my head like a bulrush, and wonder I am not cut off as a cumberer of the ground. Such is my state, and I count it a mercy of mercies (I would I were more thankful) that I at times am favoured with a little hope, faith, patience, love, &c. &c., and have been taught that these can be produced in the soul by the blessed Spirit alone. I know the Lord can indulge me with more if he see fit; but I dare not entertain the least thought of finding fault with the measure he has imparted. I want to feel as Hart sings,

"Be thankful for present, and then ask for more."

I earnestly, at this moment, cry in my soul, "Lord, keep me from sin, that it may not grieve me, and lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me." The poor, unexercised, all-faith men are right in some of their remarks, but whether they live and act as they say is quite another thing. I believe, as you do, that if they had learnt experimentally that "without him they can do nothing," they would not entertain their high-towering notions.

F——, Sept., 1844.

I. D.

A LETTER FROM THE LATE MR. GADSBY.

My dear Friend,—Yours came to hand, and I was very glad to hear from you, but sorry to find that you have a minister you cannot profit under. This is a dark day; and I think the people of God do not appear to be blessed with a spirit of prayer that the Lord would send forth true labourers into his vineyard.

It is one thing to be a real Christian, but another to be a real minister of Christ. God does not send every real Christian to be a minister; and if a Christian go forth without the Lord's sending

him, he will make both himself and others wretched. But after all, what a mercy it is that the blessed Spirit does now and then shine into the souls of his people, and bless them with a sweet view and feeling of Christ! O my friend, this is of more worth than all the world; to have Christ as our All and in all will be a blessed support when every thing else fails.

Honours crown his brow, he is a Friend at all times; and though we cannot always see him or feel him near, still he *is* near, and in his own time he will show himself near, and cause us to sing the wonders of his love. Our darkness, deadness, and confusion make way for the manifestation of his glorious light, life, and divine order: so that while we have nothing to say of self but what is enough to shame us, we can at times sweetly say of him, that "he does all things well." And his well-doing and well-being is the ground of our hope. Take away Christ and his glorious work, and it is all over with poor me. But when his gracious Majesty enables me, in vital faith and feeling, to say, "This God is my God for ever and ever, he will be my guide even unto death," I feel that I have all I need in him. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Romans viii. 32.)

"None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good."

As it respects my coming your way this year, I think it is not likely. My leg swells much; and if I go to London I must not go out of my way, for any exertion makes my leg worse; therefore I must be as quiet as I well can be this year. I therefore mean, God willing, to go the direct road to London, and not call anywhere except Woburn, which will be a rest upon the road.

What the next year may bring forth the Lord only knows; but if I never see Lakenheath again, I believe that there are some precious souls there that I shall meet in heaven, and "never part again."

O the blessedness of meeting in Christ! There the whole family will meet together, when the world is in a blaze.

Give my love to all friends young and old. That the Lord may be with and bless you all, is the prayer of yours in the Lord, with love to you and your spouse,

W. GADSBY.

February 1, 1841.

OBITUARY.

A few particulars are here offered of the experience of Mary Whittle, wife of William Whittle, a small grazier and dairyman, of Ashwell, near Oakham, Rutland, particularly of her last days, when the Lord in his loving kindness and tender mercy visited her soul with his superabounding joy and peace in believing.

She was born of Wesleyan parents, in 1805, at Melton Mowbray, and in her early days embraced their sentiments; but when she went

out to service she made no particular profession of religion. She was married in 1828. In 1831 or 32 Mr. Tiptaft began to preach at Oakham, in the Riding School, there being then no chapel. Her husband went to hear him, and after hearing him a few times persuaded her to go with him. She went, to oblige him, but it was very much against her mind; for afterwards, she often said what a bad spirit she went in, not liking the strange doctrine of election. But the first time she went to hear she came away with the arrow of conviction sticking fast in her heart. A part of the text (Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7) seemed to cut her down, particularly the words, "*And will by no means clear the guilty.*" She felt herself a poor guilty sinner, and that the Lord would not regard her in mercy, but felt herself exposed to his wrath. From a neighbour that had been many years in the way, who had conversation with her, she seemed to get a clear knowledge of, and an insight into, the doctrines of grace and the plan of salvation, the utter inability of poor fallen creatures to recover themselves from the ruin of the fall, and became a strong contender for the truth; though the blessedness of it had not been then sealed by the peace-speaking blood of Jesus to her soul. She almost constantly attended ever afterwards the preaching of the gospel at Providence Chapel, Oakham, under the ministry of Mr. T. Mr. P. and others, whom she heard approvingly, though it seemed she had, as it were, to follow on in chains. But after a time she experienced something of the mercy and goodness of God to her soul; and in conversing about the matter with some believing friends of the village, at parting, she expressed her fears that she had said too much about it, and that she should suffer from the attacks of the great accuser of the saints, who wished to insinuate that she had no part in the matter.

For some years before her death, her state of bodily health was very indifferent; she also experienced but little joy and peace in believing; and for a long time had very little communication with any one about soul matters; yet continued hearing the truth. In February, 1850, she became seriously afflicted with a most painful disease in the bowels, for which she could get no effectual relief through medicine; and it became evident to herself and all acquainted with her, that her days on earth must shortly come to an end, should it not be the Lord's will to bring about a wonderful change. Until near the end, she was in a very dead state of soul, which gave her husband and her believing friends much concern and uneasiness, and some female friends that daily visited her came away from her many times sad and cast down in their feelings about her, seeing her, in all human probability, approaching her end without a satisfactory and comforting manifestation of the reality of the Spirit's work, and of the love of God unto her. Yet there was a faint hope springing up at the worst of times, which was as an anchor to her soul; but her time of love was not yet come.

At length a desire for the manifested love of God sprang up in her soul, and she wished her husband to read to her out of Isaiah, and also the 145th hymn, Gadsby's Selection. She then said,

she thought she should get a little sleep, which she did. Soon as she awoke, her peace was come, and she burst into singing the two last verses of the 144th hymn; this was on the Monday, at four o'clock, April 22. When her husband came into her room, he expressed his surprise to hear her singing, as she was not a singing woman, and she seemed to sing so sweetly. She said to him, "I have been so blessed." Three times over she repeated it. Her daughter came up into the room and said, "Mother, are you better?" she answered, "My dear, I am so blessed; thou dost not know, but thou wilt, if the Lord's will." She then wished the friends residing in the village to be sent for, to witness her blessing; they all went into her bedroom, and it was blessed indeed to see and hear her: her cup did indeed seem to run over, and she kept constantly praising and blessing God for his manifested love and mercy to her in such words as, "Blest Lamb! precious Saviour!" &c., acknowledging her own vileness and unworthiness. And she wished Mr. T., from whose lips she first heard the truth, could have witnessed her joy, and blessed God for sending him to preach the everlasting gospel. She also wished Mr. P. could see her, as she could give a blessed testimony to the truths he spoke. She exclaimed, "O tell all doubting souls to doubt no more," with a particular message to a female, who had been long walking in darkness; "for the Lord has shown mercy to me, the vilest of the vile." She had been backward to speak of spiritual things; but now her heart was opened, and her tongue loosed, to tell all she felt. Her body and soul seemed to receive strength quite beyond nature to speak forth the blessed things she was enjoying in a most heavenly manner: and it was indeed felt by all believing souls that heard her, to be a most strengthening, comforting season. She asked "if it was possible that the enemy could ever make her doubt any more?" A friend answered her, "that he might; but that she would not be left comfortless."

On Tuesday morning the 23rd, she wished her husband to read out of Solomon's Song to her; she was very comfortable in her soul. In the afternoon her body was very much in pain, and her strength seemed to be going fast; at night she appeared to be dying.

On Wednesday morning, the 24th, about one o'clock, she awoke from a short sleep, with a wonderful view of the baptism of the Spirit; she exclaimed, "This is the baptism of the Spirit. Help me to bless and praise the Lord. If I had a thousand tongues I would praise the Lord." She said it came to her all in a moment; she said, "I see it clearly without a cloud;" here she again wished Mr. T. was with her, to hear and see her joy. She then took leave of her son and daughter in a most affecting manner. told them to shun evil company, and to walk in wisdom's ways, and to give her dying love and advice to her younger son, who is a soldier and abroad.

About seven o'clock she was again left to prove, unless upheld by the omnipotent arm of Jehovah, she must fall. Under a pressure of great bodily pain, she told her husband and those present to leave the room; her husband stood behind the curtains. She asked why

the Lord should let her lie in that suffering state; then seeing her husband was behind the curtains, she again told him to go out of the room and leave her to herself, expressing a fear that she should die a reprobate after all the Lord's goodness and mercy to her, the enemy suggesting to her at that time to curse God and die. She exclaimed, "No, no, no, I'll bless him, bless him, bless him, bless him," as fast as she could utter the words; after which she was held again in his embrace.

This being the last day she lived, she expressed a desire in the morning that the friends should come that afternoon to tea with her; it was thought she most likely would not be able to see them; but they went, and she seemed wonderfully strengthened for the occasion. She read a hymn, the 429th, and talked freely to all, making mention of passages of the word that had been blessed to her, and how she was enabled to give up all earthly things; and particularly addressed herself to her husband, expressive of how kind and affectionate he had been to her through life; but now she could leave him, as she felt she had got another husband. She was most cheerful, full of blessing and praising the Lord. She felt she was near her end. Her medical man, Mr. K., a member of the Baptist church meeting at Oakham, told her she could not continue long, as her pulse was changing fast; and she told him of her joys, which, she said, caused him to weep over her. Before the friends left her, one was asked to engage in prayer, "I," she exclaimed, "I shall hear you once more;" and the Lord enabled him to speak a few words in season, which she seemed greatly to enjoy. After the friends took their leave of her, she seemed, as it were, to begin to droop, and sink in death; still her countenance bore the marks of inward peace and joy; those that stood by her thought her almost gone; but, reviving a little, seeing her husband standing by, she laid her hand upon his breast, and looking up with a sweet smile on her countenance, waved her hands upwards in a most triumphant manner. A short time after, a female friend asked her if Christ was precious, to which she again smiled sweetly, and looked up, and waved her hands as before. A short time after she exchanged time for a blessed eternity, at ten minutes past eight o'clock on Thursday morning, April 25th, 1850, aged forty-five years.

The chapters read in Isaiah were the xli. and xlii. Amongst the many texts of Scripture she named, the following are remembered: (Psalm ciii. 1,) "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name." (Psalm xxiii. 4,) "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and staff they comfort me." (Solomon's Song ii. 4,) "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." (Revelation ii. 17,) "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it." She once exclaimed, "What a blessed thing it is on our death-bed to be enabled to say, My Lord and my God!"

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 a 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. 10.

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EXPERIENCE OF WILLIAM HARLEY.

[The following Experience is contained in a Manuscript Book in the handwriting of William Harley himself, who has also given in the same volume an account of his call to the ministry and his labours in it. This book having come into our hands, we think it may, with God's blessing, interest and edify some of our readers.]

I was born in London, in the year 1723; and, during my childhood, was brought up not only without education, but without so much as a form of religion. My parents having a large family and small means, I was early put to work towards my own support, whereby I was confined all the week, and was therefore allowed the Sabbath as a day of recreation, without any intimation respecting the duties which I owed to God on that day. Surely I may say, “My father was an Amorite, and my mother an Hittite.” (Ezekiel xvi. 3.)

I mention this, not to reproach my parents; no, God forbid; but because I fear this is the case with multitudes of the labouring class in London; who, if they can by industry keep themselves decent, it is to walk in the fields on a Sunday in the summer season, and to visit one another in the winter: hardly ever appearing at any place of worship whatsoever. And secondly, to illustrate the riches of sovereign grace, in being merciful to me, so mean and insignificant, as well as worthless a creature, whom a fellow mortal would hardly regard. But God hath said, “I will take you one of a city and two of a family, and bring you to Zion.” (Jeremiah iii. 14.) “Yet who am I, O Lord God, and what is mine house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?” (1 Chron. xvii. 16.)

When about the age of twelve years, my father was removed from

me by death; which in the nature of it was an affliction, but in the effect of it was to me a great mercy; for had my father lived, in all probability I should have been brought up to manhood in the same ignorance and irreligion. But God had provided some better thing for me. (Hebrews xi. 40.) And, therefore, about two years after my father's death, I was providentially placed in a religious family, where I was kept under the strict discipline of family, as well as public duties of the Christian religion. Here I was first set to, and encouraged to read; and by constant, diligent, and unwearied application, made such proficiency as to be enabled to read several of Mr. Bunyan's books; as his "Holy War," his "Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ," "The Pilgrim's Progress;" with Fox's "Book of Martyrs;" Drelin-court "on Death;" and several other entertaining as well as profitable books.

My master finding I took delight in reading, gave me all due encouragement, and appointed me to read to the family for one hour every evening; and for my further encouragement paid a subscription for me, and I was admitted a catechumen* in an Expository Lecture, then carried on by Dr. Marriot, in Lime-street, London.

In this exercise, I was very studious to excel in my answers my fellow catechumens; being fond of receiving—but need I tell you I was proud of?—the commendations I obtained from the doctor's own mouth, sometimes in private and sometimes in public from the pulpit. But I had hard work to conceal my throbbing breast, already big with applause, when I heard it whispered among the people, that of all the young men concerned in the exercise I seemed to bid the fairest for being called into the ministry.

My constant reading to the family of religious books, and this exercise compelling me to the search and study of the Scriptures to form my answers, may be looked upon as somewhat similar to a course of divinity studies; and as I had no other studies to engage or divide my attention, I probably made a greater progress in the knowledge of real divinity than some individuals in the schools where they have other studies to pursue.

But all this while I had but a theory of divinity in the letter of the Scriptures; and had no saving, experimental knowledge of "the truth as it is in Jesus."

It is true that, from more than three years' catechetical exercise and much reading, as before mentioned, I was so far informed in my judgment and understanding, as to be able to frame arguments and discuss points of divinity, and could defend the doctrines of the gospel by scriptural reasonings, beyond many of my equals; and proud I was, when I could vanquish an antagonist in disputation by dint of argument.

My abilities were admired by many; but O, the spiritual man could see I wanted that of which I was insensible, which made one of them once say to me, "God has bestowed great gifts upon you;" but added, "Remember, gifts are not grace."

* A person under religious instruction.

The difference which he mentioned I knew not; but must own his latter words were as a curb to my swelling pride. Upon his first encomium, Surely, thought I, he suspects my being gracious; but lest such a thought should make a deeper impression upon me, my deceived heart presently cried within me, "But I hope he is mistaken in that; for if 'this is life eternal, to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent,' (John xvii. 3,) I think I know him; for if I don't, I don't know who does. I can prove the divinity of Christ; I am able to defend the doctrine of justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ; I believe the doctrine of election, and hold with the saints' final perseverance. As too I am not afraid to own, nor ashamed to confess, yea, am willing to dispute these matters, surely I must be found to confess Christ before men, and as such shall doubtless be owned by Christ "before his Father and the holy angels." (Matthew x. 32.)

Thus, like the Laodiceans, I imagined myself "to be rich, and increased in goods, and to have need of nothing;" but knew not that "I was poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked." (Revelation ii. 17.)

But now the time,* the fulness of time was come, (Galatians iv. 4,) when my soul must no longer "walk in darkness," but be made partaker of "the light of life." (John viii. 12.) In order hereunto, the Lord was pleased to incline me to go and hear the word preached at a place† where I was not used to attend, and to hear a person‡ at that time of no esteem in my account. But herein God displays his sovereignty, in working by whom as well as on whom, and when he pleases.

When I entered the place and heard his voice, I despised him in my heart as a person not able to teach me. I thought I knew as much of the scripture doctrines as he could tell me; but as his accent was strong, his zeal great, and his voice loud, I assigned this reason for his raving at the people, (as I then thought,) that he was preaching to a company of poor, ignorant, and illiterate creatures, such as the Pharisees said "know not the law, and are cursed." (John vii. 49.) Therefore he was forced to labour the harder, in order, as we usually say, "to beat it into them." But however I thus endeavoured to exclude myself from any concern in what he said, such a power attended the word as engaged my attention; and in the ideas of my mind, the word seemed to come as direct from him to me, as an arrow from a bow towards its intended mark; yea, if he turned himself from me, the word seemed to rebound to strike at me.

When the sermon was over, I returned very pensive, resolving to "search whether these things were so or not;" for with propriety could I say with the Athenians, "Thou bringest certain strange things to our ears." But O, by means of carnal acquaintance whom I met on my return home, my pensive thoughts were diverted by youthful mirth; but when parted from them, my concern returned

* About the year 1742.

† Mr. Whitefield's, the Tabernacle.

‡ Mr. Howell Harris.

with double weight that I should so soon forget what I had been hearing, and for such trifling pleasures of sin, for so short a season. (Hebrews xi. 25.) O how shall I escape, I thought, if I neglect so great salvation (Hebrews ii. 3) as my eternal concerns? "The end of those things is death." (Romans vi. 21.)

However, I went again the next night to hear the same person, who was then preaching from the parable of the ten virgins, "Whereof five were wise and five were foolish." (Matt. xxv. 1—4.) What he endeavoured to prove from thence was, That persons might go very far in resemblance of God's people, and yet be but hypocrites at last. And one of the observations he made was, That the hypocrite might go as far, yea, might excel in gifts and external knowledge the real Christian: he may be able to dispute for doctrines, and carry his point by dint of argument, when a poor Christian indeed may be hardly able to say anything for Christ. This observation was accompanied with a powerful conviction in my soul that I had nothing but external knowledge, had looked after nothing but a capacity for argumentation, and at most but to appear somebody in religion.

I now began to think myself in the case of the foolish virgins. Having nothing more than a hypocrite might have, I began to feel myself condemned in my conscience with the hypocrites, whose condition I thought must be the worst of all men's, because there is "woe" denounced against them. (Matthew xxiii. 13—15, 23, 25, 27, 29.)

O, thought I, I am now weighed in the balance, and find I am wanting. (Daniel v. 27.) Yet lack I that one thing. (Mark x. 21.) O I have not only deceived others, but have deceived myself the worst. Woe is me, for I am a hypocrite! O "what shall I do to be saved?" (Acts xvi. 30.)

Some few days after this, I had these words dropped upon my mind: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." (Luke xiii. 24.) At present I had no idea of these words having reference to Christ, the door of the sheep, (John x. 7—9,) or entering into fellowship with God or his saints by the Spirit of Christ in his gospel; but only to an admission into heaven at death, which indeed was all which as yet I was concerned about. And when I cried to be saved, it was only from wrath, for sin was not as yet embittered to me; and my desire of going to heaven was more through a fear of going to hell than any relish I as yet had for heavenly things.

My next inquiry was, How I must strive to enter therein; and I thought it must be by keeping the commandments. For though it is said, "Many shall seek to enter, and shall not be able;" yet it is not said, Many shall *strive*, and shall not be able. For by striving, I not only understood an endeavour to keep the commandments, but also a diligent perseverance therein unto death. Let me here, as elsewhere I shall have occasion, remark the legality of my spirit with an enlightened judgment; for I had the doctrines of grace and the gospel in my head, with the spirit and works of the law in my heart. Accordingly, I began to look at the law, and to think of squaring my

life in conformity thereto; but when I came to read our Lord's explanation of the law, I found myself to be deficient in every part of it; my conscience accused me as guilty of the whole; nor could I find power and strength sufficient to keep any part thereof.

I now began to see that I was a greater sinner than I once thought myself to be; and finding that I could not do the things that I would, I began to think it in vain to strive, as thereby I seemed farther and farther from the thing desired. My number of sins was daily increased and my guilt equally enlarged, till my sins of omission and commission were accumulated to a great mountain, too heavy for me to bear and too great for me to remove; which seemed to lie between me and my entrance into heaven, like the stone before the mouth of the sepulchre, into which there could be no entering till it was first rolled away. (Mark xvi. 3, 4.) And as I knew not how this could be done, the discouragement abated my vigour, but increased my trouble; then again was I made to cry out, "What shall I do to be saved?" In the distress of my soul, I had this scripture brought to my mind: "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified." (Romans iii. 20.)

Now, whether those words were brought by Satan, who could quote Scripture to Christ himself, (Matthew iv. 6,) with a design to make me remiss, or whether they were brought by the Spirit, in order to convince me of self-insufficiency, I will not say; but sure I am, that my naughty heart made a bad use of them, and drew this false conclusion from them: If by the deeds of the law no flesh living can be justified, what matters it then whether I keep the law? And from hence I endeavoured to make myself easy, and laboured to stifle or throw away conviction; and in a little time, conscience seemed hushed and all was quiet again. But this was rather a stupidity than a peace; being often disturbed by the least thought of sickness, death, or judgment.

After some time, my mind was much taken up in contemplating the happiness of God's people, as spoken of by Balaam in the Book of Numbers. (Numbers xxiii. xxiv., particularly verses 5 and 9 of chapter xxiv.) "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!" "Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee." When considering what he there further says of them and their happiness, I found even my heart to pant with a desire to "die the death of the righteous," and that "my last end might be like his;" when methought, as though a voice spoke within me, "And wouldst thou die their death? then thou must first live their life." To which the desire of my soul replied, in a kind of ejaculatory prayer, "Lord, help me so to live."

I was now willing to live a righteous life, in order that I might die a happy death; but must own that I knew nothing of the life of the righteous. I knew nothing of the life of faith in Christ; nothing of living to God, or of a life of communion with him; and therefore could only think of a life of strict morality, a life of conformity to the moral law. But this I had before found I could not do. However, necessity seemed to put me upon another trial, and to begin afresh

and see what might be done. And because I thought I had been deficient in the duty of prayer, I continued in such kind of mental ejaculatory petitions as, Lord, help me! Lord, keep me! Lord, save me! Lord, have mercy on me! Lord, deliver me! &c., almost incessantly, not only to the neglect of the duties of my station in life, but I fear also to the taking of God's name in vain; as it was often without thought, and most times without that reverence which is due to his holy name.

This continued for some time, and I began to think all would be well, till those words of our Lord sounded in my ears: "For I say unto you, Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew v. 20.) Hereupon I began to examine and to take notice what the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees was, which I found by the Word of God to be such as I came far short of; for I found that they prayed publicly in the synagogues, which I had never done; yea, frequently standing in the corners of the streets. (Matthew vi. 5.) So far were they from fear of being seen to be religious, as I was, their zeal led them to the most public places of resort; they fasted often, (Luke xviii. 12,) which I thought betokened such a repentance for their sin as I was a stranger to. They were so zealous for the law and the traditions of the fathers, that they wore the precepts thereof about them in their broad phylacteries and borders of their garments. (Matthew xxiii. 5.) They paid tithes of all that they possessed, (Luke xviii. 12,) which I looked upon in a twofold light; first, as an evidence of their strict honesty to man, to whom they were enjoined to pay them; and secondly, of their piety and devotion to God, as it was a kind of first-fruits unto him of all their increase; and I being yet ignorant of the righteousness of Christ, was ready to say, Lord, "how can these things be?" (John iii. 9,) like Nicodemus in another case. Is it possible there should be a righteousness to exceed their righteousness? till I further observed, that their public religion was not so much of zeal for, or love to God, as of pride in themselves; for our Lord tells us that they "loved the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi;" (Matthew xxiii. 6, 7,) did their alms to be seen of men; (Matthew vi. 2;) and that they devoured widows' houses, and for a pretence made long prayers. (Matthew xxiii. 14.) O, thought I, they were not sincere; they for a pretence made long prayers; this it was that made their righteousness deficient. And if I am but sincere in my intentions and professions, both to God and man, this will make my righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. Wherefore, I now began to look for an internal frame of heart to tally with the dictates of conscience; but this, as Job speaks, proved me perverse. (Job ix. 20.) For I soon found that my efforts to prevent vain thoughts, yea, wicked thoughts, and the evils I felt rise in my heart, were but like a person labouring to stop a rapid stream, which, though stemmed for a time, and for but a small space of time, in one place, will by-and-by break forth.

in another with greater rapidity. And this was the case, especially with respect to heart-uncleanness, a sin which did of all others most easily, most grievously, and most frequently beset me. Whereupon, like Job, I made a covenant, (Job xxxi. 1;) but O! with more than my eyes, with God, making to him this solemn promise: That if ever I should be any more guilty of this sin in thought again, I would not trouble the Almighty with petitions for pardon, but (O dreadful to think of) I agreed to be instantly damned. Therefore, tremble, O my heart, to think of what thou didst not then fear to presume to do; namely, to promise never to ask for pardon any more.

But, O my soul, bless God, who did not take thee at thy word. Had God been strict to mark my iniquity, had he dealt with me according to my sin, nay, according to my own foolish and wicked agreement, not a week more could have passed over my head, before my soul would have been in hell. Surely God is good; and in this instance, let me prove that he is not as man, "that his thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways;" "he remembereth our frames, that we are but dust."

God of his mercy did not send me into hell. Yet he did not leave me wholly unpunished; but sent a degree of hell into my conscience, suffering Satan, who had prevailed against me, to insult and triumph over me, as his fast-bound captive, never to be released from him any more, to whom I had bound myself by my own voluntary vow never to ask pardon of God any more. And as he only that asks receives, which I did not dare to do, therefore I could never expect to be forgiven.

And now did I seem to be what the prophet mentions, "a terror to myself." (Jeremiah xx. 3, 4.) Words are not sufficient to express what I then felt and underwent, while I thought. However men may define the unpardonable sin, sure none is so like to be it as this, my deliberately excluding of myself from mercy. If they shall not escape who neglect so great salvation, (Hebrews ii. 3,) this is more than neglecting; this is despising the riches of God's grace with a witness. Now did I experience with Job, and might truly say, "The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirits; the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me." (Job vi. 4.)

I passed five days in this dolorous condition. By day I could not think of God but with shame to myself and with anger, nor of another world but with horror. If I said, with Job, "My bed shall ease me, my couch shall comfort me or ease my complaint, then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions." (Job vii. 14.) Thus, by day and by night, there was nothing in me but a fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation to devour me, as God's adversary. (Heb. x. 27).

But God, who is rich in mercy, had more gracious designs towards me; and therefore at the five days' end I found myself much drawn and inclined to go to prayer, but at first did not dare to cherish such a thought, lest God, provoked therewith, should spurn me out of his

presence to deserved wrath. Yet I found myself so pressed to pray, that I was almost as motionless as a statue, not daring to go to prayer, nor able to resolve against it or to go from it. At length, falling upon my knees, I felt such a sense of my vileness come upon me, that my spirit seemed to shrink within me. If ever it was with me as it was with the poor publican, it was then; not daring to lift up my eyes towards heaven, nor offer one petition to God, till this thought passed my breast, I am not more unworthy than I am needy. Then with the publican did I pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner," (Luke xviii. 13,) and having begun, I found such liberty and freedom to pour out my soul to God, with such strong crying and tears, that I do not know I have ever felt the like since; I am sure I never did before. And from hence I began to take comfort again, still looking at the works of my own hands.

(To be continued.)

GOD'S FAITHFULNESS TO HIS PROMISES.

A DISCOURSE ON ACTS xxvii. 25.

"I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me."—Acts xxvii. 25.

The great Apostle Paul, while preaching at Jerusalem, found very true what his Lord had left upon record, "in the world ye shall have tribulation." (John xvi. 33.) So he came at that sterling truth which he told his son Timothy of, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. iii. 12.) He found it so in all his movements, all his labours, and all his travels. Hence he says, when going up to this very persecution, "And now, behold, I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city that bonds and afflictions abide me." (Acts xx. 23.) And not only had he the testimony of the Spirit in his heart of bonds and afflictions abiding him, but Agabus, a certain prophet, foretold him of this very trial before it came to pass. For when he was at Cæsarea, going up to Jerusalem, Agabus came into Philip's house, where Paul was staying; and "he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles." (Acts xxi. 11.) So that Paul had a double testimony of his coming troubles; but so established was his soul in the divine truths of God, that this did not move his faith nor excite his fear. He therefore said, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." (Acts xx. 24.) Dark prospects did not frighten Paul; he was too firmly rooted and grounded in the unchanging counsels of God. Hence, when some tried to persuade him, with these appearances of things, not to go up

to Jerusalem, he said, "What! mean ye to weep and break my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts xxi. 13.)

With this prospect before him, he went up to Jerusalem; and when there in the temple, the Jews which were of Asia, according to Agabus's prediction, rose up against him, "and laid hands on him, crying out, Men of Israel, help; this is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place; and further, brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place." This made a commotion throughout the whole of the city, and Paul was forthwith taken; a multitude of the people following after, crying, "Away with him!" (Acts xxi. 36.) From their violence, he knew not but that his holy resolution of being "ready to die at Jerusalem" might soon be put to the test; till one night, in the castle where he was imprisoned, the Lord stood by him and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." (Acts xxiii. 11.) This made known to Paul that he was not at this time to be the victim of their malice at Jerusalem, though hard beset by them on every side, and though at this very time there were "more than forty" who had bound themselves over neither to eat nor drink until they had killed Paul.

Well, after Paul had been passed from hand to hand, he and several more prisoners were shipped off for Rome, he having appealed unto Cæsar. While on their passage they were overtaken by a great storm, which threatened to swallow them all up; so much so that, the divine historian says, "all hope that we should be saved was then taken away." (Acts xxvii. 20.) But the Lord, who knew more about the issue than they who judged according to appearances, condescended to appear to his servant Paul in the night, when this tempest was beating upon them; so that this poor insignificant prisoner (as no doubt the officers thought he was) took upon himself to exhort them all to anticipate a safe issue from the storm, notwithstanding all hope, according to sense, was taken away. So he arose, and addressed them as follows: "Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer, for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar; and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer; for *I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.*" (Acts xxvii. 22—25.)

Here, then, was Paul, in the midst of a mighty tempest, and all circumstances threatening to swallow him and his comrades up; yet he had the word of God revealed in him to back against it all; which faith handling rightly, led him to be certain of deliverance, though in the midst of trial. This faith God never did nor ever will put to the blush, because it is of his own divine generation. And the Lord fulfilled here all that Paul so firmly believed. For we read,

“They which could swim cast themselves into the sea, and got to land; and the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass that they escaped *all safe to land.*” (Acts xxvii. 44.)

I will not now dilate longer on the circumstances of the text, but, God willing, proceed to consider somewhat the divine reality of this *grace* of faith in the hearts of God's elect. And for the better understanding of this experimental and important subject, we proceed to consider it under three distinct heads:

I. The *ground* of faith, viz., the word of God: “I believe God, that it shall be even *as it was told me.*”

II. The *work* of faith: “I *believe* God.”

III. The end of faith, viz., the fulfilment of all her expectations: “They *escaped all safe to land.*”

I. Now, respecting the first of these heads, we may notice that Paul had divine authority for believing they should all be saved from ship wreck; for the angel of God had appeared to him and said to him, “Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar, and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.” Here was the ground of Paul's faith: it had been told him by an angel of God that they should be delivered. And he believed the testimony in opposition to wind and tide. But if he had come forth and told them they should be all delivered, without the testimony of God in his soul, and conscious that it was so, this would have been presumption, and not faith.

This was the ground, too, upon which David expected and believed God would build him a house. He says, “Thou, O my God, hast *told thy servant* thou wilt build him an house; therefore thy servant has found in his heart to pray before thee.” (1 Chron. xvii. 25.) Here we see the ground of David's prayer and David's faith. God had *told him* he would build him a house; therefore on that ground he came to him to ask him to accomplish the word of his own mouth, and fulfil his own promise; here is where faith lays hold with her hand. “God is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” (Num. xxiii. 19.) When God speaks, it is a mere revelation of what was in his will from all eternity, all which will he unreservedly accomplishes in his own time. Faith, when in true exercise, grasps it as such, and accordingly gets her reward.

Whenever anything is taken for the ground of faith, short of the word of Jehovah, that will be sure, sooner or later, to fail. Thus Ahab fixed his faith on the testimony of four hundred false prophets, but despised the one true one; and so lost his life. (1 Kings, xxii.) Thus the man of God listened to the lying prophet, and believed him rather than the word which God himself spoke to him; and so was killed by a lion. (1 Kings xiii. 24.) And so, too, with the whole congregation of Israel, who believed the report of the spies rather than the word of God, and thus never entered into the promised land. (Num. xiii., xiv.) Nothing is so substantial as the Lord's word:

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away," (Mark xiii. 31,) says our blessed Redeemer. And these words will be proved true both by damned and saved.

When Jeremiah prophesied that the king of Babylon should come against Jerusalem, besiege it, overcome it, and carry it away captive for seventy years, Hananiah also came forward, and with all the outward appearance of a true prophet predicted that in two full years the whole should be restored. (Jer. xxviii. 11.) There were plenty of carnal men ready enough to place their carnal faith and confidence in the fleshly prediction of this lying prophet; but the result of it was, that it turned out to be a sandy foundation; and every one who so depended perished, either with sword, or famine, or pestilence; (Jer. xxix. 17;) while those who depended on the word of Jehovah, and made this the ground of their faith, were saved alive.

Now all those who, obediently to the Lord's word and depending on his promise, went into Babylon, received a fulfilment of the word and promise of the Lord, or their children did in their stead. They had divine authority for expecting it, and therefore solid ground for their faith. The authority runs thus: "Thus saith the Lord, After seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place; for I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give unto you an expected end," &c. And the faith of those who trusted in this word was not put to the blush; for God wonderfully worked out their deliverance, as may be seen by reading Ezra, 1st chapter.

There have been false prophets in every age, holding out human and carnal authority for the faith of mortals. And not a few cling to it, as a horse leans to the knife that pierces his heart; whilst they slight that only ground of faith which will carry them through every difficulty, and see them righted in every strait. Indeed, the Bible is full of instances of this and its fallacy, and shows us clearly that he who trusts to anything short of Jehovah's word, trusts to an uncertainty, if not to a certain deception.

But those who have the word of Jehovah for their faith's foundation, fix on a certainty indeed. And let them have whatever contradiction, or opposition, or dark appearance they may, it matters not, for that word shall stand on which they fix. Thus Abraham had divine authority to believe he should be the father of thousands, though there was no appearance of any issue at all. And accordingly so it was. Joseph had the same authority to believe his brethren should bow to him; and as certainly they did. Israel had the same ground to expect deliverance from Egypt; and, despite all opposition, at the set time they were delivered. David had the same authority to look forward to the crown; and, notwithstanding Saul, the crown he one day possessed. The Jews had the same ground to expect deliverance from Babylon, and God honoured his own word and their faith. Abraham had the same authority to leave his native country for Canaan, and "he went forth to go into the land of Canaan," and

into the land of Canaan he came. (Gen. xii. 25.) Paul had the same authority to believe he should get to Rome, and that none on board the storm-stricken vessel should be lost; and all came to pass accordingly. So that we see that when the word of God is made the ground of faith, all is certain to end right; but when anything else is, it is certain to end wrong.

Hence our blessed Lord said, "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man who built his house upon a rock." (Matt. vii. 24.) These sayings of Christ are his words, which is the rock on which he would have his people build. And "doing" them is neither more nor less than receiving them by faith in the heart; for our doing or obedience is the "obedience of faith," (Rom. i. 5,) as may be gathered from the very chapter in which Christ speaks the above words. He says there, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. vii. 21.) And doing the will of his Father he explains to be believing in him; for he says, "This is the will of God, (or the work or obedience that God requires,) that ye believe in him whom he hath sent." (Matt. vii. 26.) And again, "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth in him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." Moreover, disobedience is said to be unbelief, which is indeed the life of all disobedience. And faith is called obedience in the word of God. Hence, when Paul wrote to the Ephesians, he said, "For because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." (Eph. v. 6.) Now, in the margin it is rendered, "upon the children of *unbelief*," which shows that the disobedience is the *disobedience of unbelief*; and this is the disobedience which Paul speaks of in writing to the Romans. He says, "But ye have not all *obeyed* the gospel, for Esaias saith, 'Lord, who hath *believed* our report?'" (Rom. x. 16;) from which it is plain the disobedience there meant is the disobedience of unbelief.

Now, inasmuch as unbelief is the height of all disobedience, so faith is the essence of all true obedience, as I have already shown, and which may be clearly seen by the following Scriptures: Rom. xvi. 25, 26; x. 16; Acts vi. 7, &c.

The "doing," then, of the sayings of Christ, is receiving them by faith.* And he that doth so, and places his faith on this foundation, is said to "build his house upon a rock." And then Christ goes on with his figure, and shows how firm that man shall stand in the time when firmness and solidity shall be most needed; and says, "The rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock."

* It is true that all true obedience springs from faith; but Christ seems here to mean gospel obedience as well as faith.

(Matt. vii. 25.) Judgments, persecutions, tribulations, afflictions, crosses, deprivations, oppositions, and trials of every kind, may come and beat upon that man, but lo! he stands; he falls not, for he is founded upon a rock, and until that rock falls he cannot move.

"And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it." (Verses 26, 27.) Here is a description of those who place their faith and confidence in something short of the words or sayings of Christ. They are likened to a man who built upon the sand; and when crosses, difficulties, persecutions, afflictions, and troubles, cross their faith, as they surely will, down comes the whole fabric to their utter destruction and confusion.

He, therefore, that has faith must have it in the word of God; and he that has faith in the word of God must have it by divine authority from God. Thus Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Paul, and many others heard the word of God for themselves, and to their hearts; and this was their authority for expecting from God in the way they did. Hence the question for us mortals here below is, What authority have I to expect anything from God, especially the salvation of my soul? *Many*, our Lord says, will by and by tell him that they have prophesied in his name; in his name cast out devils; and in his name done many wonderful works; but all this will stand for nothing at that great day of account. They had no authority to expect anything at his hand; he never knew them with love, goodwill, and approbation, and never told them to do what they did. "How camest thou in hither without the wedding garment?" will one day make speechless all who are not by God himself bidden to the supper. It will thrill through the speechless crowd, and pick out, one by one, all who are not divinely authorized to sit down with Christ in his kingdom. This is the gospel day, however slighted, in which "the dead hear the voice of the Son of God." (John v. 25.) And his voice speaks unto them those words, which are "spirit and life." (John vi. 63.) Hence it is said, "They that hear shall *live*." (John v. 25.) because that word of Christ which is effectually spoken unto them contains power and life in it; and as such it enters into the heart, and communicates of its own divine nature. And so the person lives—lives in a spiritual existence here; and as certain as that is the case, in a higher and glorified existence hereafter.

He therefore that hath this rich jewel of spiritual life in his heart, hath it by the word of Christ: for certain it is, that it can come from no other quarter. Wherever spiritually sown, Christ's word takes root in the heart, and draws out the affections towards himself. Hence, in the parable of the sower, Christ explains the seed to be his own word. "The sower soweth the word." (Mark iv. 14.) And Peter calls this word an incorruptible seed in the following words: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." (1 Peter i. 23.) Here we see the certainty of eternal life following the implanta-

tion of the word of Christ in the heart; first, in its being called "incorruptible," and in its being said to "live and abide for ever;" for he that hath this spiritual life is safe for eternal glory.

The apostle then goes on to show the vanity and fading nothingness of all the works of the flesh and all the goodliness of man. He says, "All flesh is as grass, and all the goodliness of man as the flower of the field; the grass (that is, all flesh and fleshly worth and doings) withereth, and the flower (or goodliness, as Isaiah renders it, which means good works, Arminian performances, and freewill doing) fadeth away." All that is in nature, and all that man can perform in a state of nature, let him profess whatever he may, all "falleth away." But notwithstanding this clean sweep that the apostle makes, he tells us of one thing that will stand firm, and will not fall away; and that one thing is the word of Christ in the heart of his children. This, however defaced and darkened, will never fall. Hence he continues, "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever; and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." (1 Pet. i. 25.)

Now there are many promises in the word of God that speak as direct to certain states and cases of man as though the man's name was sounded through a golden trumpet from the portals of heaven. And he that hath this spiritual life, hath divine authority to trust in Jehovah for eternal salvation, this being a particular state to which the promises speak. For Christ's working this life in his heart, does in so many words say, "Thou art one of my sheep;" according to this word, "I give unto my sheep (none else) eternal life." (John x. 28.) So that this manifestation of life is of an eternal, never-dying nature. And he that hath it is said to be a sheep of Christ. Here, then, is divine authority for faith to trust in Jehovah for eternal salvation. Where this spiritual life is felt—and so too with every state and case into which the family of God are brought—God's promises speak as clearly to characters as to names, as may be clearly seen by the commencement of our Saviour's sermon on the mount.

I have made this digression, if it can be called one, in order that none of the weak in faith may be discouraged by my insisting on the word of God spoken to the heart, as being the only ground of faith; for while it is true that in many of the sharp trials that the children of God may be brought into, they may hear sometimes in their soul the voice of God speaking to them, revealing some promise, or administering some comfort, (and to this I next intend to speak;) yet it is equally true that where he works a capacity for which he has in his word prepared a promise, this work stands good for the authority of faith to fix upon, the word of Christ having taken possession of that heart, and struck its fibres deeply therein.

(To be concluded in our next.)

A LETTER FROM MR. BEEMAN TO MR. KEYT.

Dear Friend,—From the length of time since I received yours, you must suppose I had quite forgotten you; but that, I think, can never be the case after receiving your first epistle.

I am thankful that God gives testimony to the word of his grace by means of such a one as I am. We read that no scripture is of any private interpretation. The passage I spoke from, some years since, was very sweet to me, and I desire to bless the Most High that he made it good to you and some others. I observed what you said after the conclusion in the morning, that we should have more of it in the evening. I knew there was more behind, if the Lord would enable me to bring it out; but I was much discouraged in the meantime, lest I should be left to myself. But as I was seeking succour from the Lord, these words came to encourage me: "I will give you a mouth, and wisdom, that all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist;" and immediately followed this: "For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." Great words to such a one as I! But you are one of the witnesses if this is true. Indeed, I had begun my subject in the evening but a few minutes, before I inwardly felt I should have no trouble in speaking that night. I have also another testimony by me, in addition to yours, from a person who had had a desire for some time to hear that portion of God's word spoken from, having never heard it treated on; and in his letter he gives a feeling confession that, whilst I was speaking, it was a means of sweetly reviving the work of God in his soul, even of his first revealing a crucified Saviour in him, which was the day of his espousals and of the gladness of his heart.

Such testimonies as these I have no objection to your calling a part of the "penny a day" promised to the labourer; for if nothing of this sort were found in any soul at Providence* whilst I was speaking, according to my feelings, I could have no desire to come. I hope I once felt my soul flow together to the goodness of the Lord, as the text you quote expresses. Then it is we can sing in the heights of Zion.

I am glad to find some in London that know the joyful sound, some to whom Christ is precious; indeed, it is he that furnishes the feast, and also is the feast of fat things upon Mount Zion. And where he is not, let whatever else be there, it is but as the mountains of Gilboa, without either dew or rain, and of course, no fields of offering. But when Christ is the heavenly entertainment, there are dew, and rain, and fields of offering too; for at such times thanksgiving from the recipients goes up. It is at such times the Lord comforts Zion, making her wilderness like Eden and her desert as the garden of the Lord; "joy and gladness are found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody."

These things have been most sweetly verified in the case of a person with us. Her deliverance came about three months since, after labouring in bondage (with a little help at times) for years. She received considerable help while I was speaking from Isaiah xlv. 21—23, and in that week she had a manifestation of Christ to her soul,

* This letter was written after preaching at Mr. Huntington's old chapel.

when all her bondage fled, all her sin was taken away, and the joy of heaven came into her heart; peace also flowed in like a river, and she was truly delighted with the abundance of Zion's glory, satisfied with the breasts of her consolations, and truly comforted in Jerusalem. She still continues on the holy mount, and her heart is filled with gratitude and her mouth with praise. I never saw a clearer deliverance. She loathes herself, and magnifies the Lord. So I hope the kingdom of God is amongst us, and does not stand in word only, but in power.

When my affection was set towards the house of the Lord, and my mind inclined to build, these words came, "Go up to the mountain, and take wood and build the house, and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified in it, saith the Lord;" also, "My Spirit remaineth among you; fear not;" and again, "In this place will I give peace, saith the Lord;" and in the 18th and 19th verses of Haggai xx., you will see what is there said. It was made out to me that, from the time I began to lay Christ as the Foundation of God's spiritual temple, I might look for his blessing. And blessed be the eternal God, I have ever since been kept looking, and to his eternal praise, have seen his blessing in many hearts. I know three at this time, who, I believe, are quickened souls; one has already gone very deep into soul trouble, and has had at times great encouragement by the application of God's word with power. I cannot doubt that they will all come out in God's good time. You know, at the finding of a lost sheep the friends and neighbours are called in to rejoice at the good tidings; believing it would be so to you, I have thus written.

Dear sir, yours most affectionately,

ISAAC BEEMAN.

Craubrook, Nov. 19, 1830.

EXTRACT.

A stranger to the life of faith makes a shuffle at believing, and thinks no work so easy or so trifling. He wonders why such gentle business should be called the fight of faith; and why the chosen twelve should pray for faith, when every human brain might quickly furnish out a handsome dose. For my own part, since first my unbelief was felt, I have been praying fifteen years for faith, and praying with some earnestness, and am not yet possessed of more than half a grain. You smile at the smallness of the quantity, but you would not, if you knew its efficacy; Jesus, who knew it well, assures you that a single grain, a grain as small as mustard seed, would remove a mountain, would remove a mountain-load of guilt from the conscience, a mountain-just from the heart, and any mountain-load of trouble from the mind. The gospel law is called the law of faith. (Rom. iii. 27.) And Jesus sendeth help, according to our faith, and is obliged to send it, not through any merit which is found in faith, but by virtue of his promise: "According to your faith, be it unto you."—*Berridge.*

HE HATH PUT A NEW SONG INTO MY MOUTH.

My dear Friend,—After my long silence in not answering your kind, long, affectionate, and experimental letter, I will now try and scrawl you a line; and may it be a line seasoned with grace; for what is all our writing, talking, reading, praying, or preaching, without grace, light, life, and power? But these things belong to the Lord alone; and what a mercy it is that he bestows grace, mercy, and truth upon such sinful creatures as we are, and that he delighteth in mercy! Indeed, "it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not;" they are "new every morning; great is thy faithfulness." O what a mercy to be blessed with grace to serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear; to draw near to him with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water; to feel that the Lord Jesus is communing with our souls from off the mercy-seat; to experience the sweet crumbs and drops of his love, dropping down into our hearts to strengthen and encourage us to follow on to know more of Christ and the power of his resurrection; to feel our hearts to go out after, cleave to, and enter into the finished work of the dear Redeemer; to put on Christ by faith; to draw virtue out of his dear fulness, and joy and rejoice in him as our All in All!

Dear friend, what a change you must have felt when the Lord brought up your soul out of the deep dungeon and dark prison; knocked off your chains and fetters; renewed pardon and peace to your heart; put a new song of praise into your mouth; unpinned your faith from an arm of flesh; drove out the fear of man; and chained your soul to the Lord Jesus Christ, by living faith, with the threefold cord, which cannot be broken! For what can be stronger than the everlasting love of God the Father, the eternal redemption of God the Son, and the perfect work of God the Holy Ghost? For love is stronger than death; and Christ hath destroyed the works of the devil, made an end of sin, redeemed us from all our enemies, gained the victory over the grave; conquered sin, death, and hell; and we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

As, then, the Lord has given your soul to taste and handle these things for yourself, you need not fear what men or women have to say about you, whether preachers or hearers, whether possessors or professors; for their sayings will all fall to the ground. "For who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not." And the Lord shall be your confidence, stay, strength, support, Guide, Teacher, Leader, Commander, Keeper, and Deliverer; so that your soul shall hang upon and trust in him, and believe that he hath loved you, and given himself for you. Those who are taught these things feelingly and experimentally are made humble, little, low, helpless, needy, and poor; nothing in their own eyes; and Christ Jesus the Lord is their whole treasure. He is precious, lovely, sweet, and glorious to the poor believer; and the more the soul knows of him, the more it wants to know, for its affections are

set upon things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

At such times the husband is loved, the children dealt tenderly with, the servants used well; the precept is practised, the command obeyed, the Saviour followed, and the Lord's people loved with a pure heart fervently. It is then the soul brings forth fruit unto God, and lives to his honour and glory, so that it "adds to its faith-virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity; and if these things be in you and abound, they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."

What a mercy it is to be led by an unerring Teacher; to be guided into all truth; to have the Spirit of truth, whom "the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him! But you know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." The Lord make you swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath; give you much singleness of eye and heart; and keep your soul looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest you be weary and faint in your mind." That the Lord may go up with you to worship, so that you may be all of one accord in one place, "for the multitude that believed were of one heart and of one soul, striving together for the faith once delivered to the saints," is the desire of your unworthy friend.

Yours for truth's sake,

Woburn, Feb. 8th, 1850.

T. G.

LETTERS BY THE LATE JAMES LEWIS, OF
CHICHESTER.

No. II.

To my dear Friends in Christ,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied! I do acknowledge my fault this day in not writing to my very dear friends before; but I assure you letter writing is by no means pleasant to my feelings, although I have much of it to do, with one and the other. I care not so much about it when matter flows easy; when the well is not too deep; when the heart is engaged; when the Lord smiles propitiously, and when a sweet sense of the love of God is felt and enjoyed in the heart. Then the pen runs freely; it is no longer a task or burden, but it becomes pleasant and delightful. Well, let us hope it may be so on the present occasion.

You need not wish a Mr. F. to be residing near you, so as to be the means of obtaining a letter oftener, for I can assure you there

are no friends within my circle with whom I correspond that I feel a greater love and union to than yourselves, or more pleasure in writing to. God hath done great things for you, and this is the reason, yea, the sole reason, of my union and spiritual love toward you.

I know you are often too much like myself, writing bitter things against yourselves, and concluding that you have neither part nor lot in God's salvation; and this arises through the unbelief of the heart, the suggestions of Satan, the workings of the flesh, the old man of sin or "the law in our members warring against the law of the mind, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members." Now, however painful these feelings may be, and still are, there must of necessity be a renewed mind and will in us, or these things never would or could be seen or felt by us; neither should we ever groan under them, be burthened by them, or cry unto God to be delivered from them. Therefore, my dear friends, these things, instead of militating against us, are certain proofs of our election, and that of God. The Holy Ghost by the apostle Paul assures us the same. Take it thus: when in his natural state he could say, "I was alive without the law once," that is, alive to himself, but dead enough to God; but when quickened in soul he speaks otherwise: "When the commandment came," that is, home to his conscience, "sin revived, and I died." And why so? Because "by the law is the knowledge of sin." "For without the law sin was dead;" "but sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived him, and by it slew him;" thus he became now quite the reverse, dead to himself, and to all his former religious duties and performances, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ, his only Lord God and Saviour. And now, since such a mighty change has taken place, what may we expect but a warfare to commence instantly? So he found it, and so have we too: "For that which I do, I allow not; for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I. If, then, I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good;" and so concludes, "Now, then, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Can you not, then, from the above quotations, see clearly where there is a real work of grace wrought in the soul, and where not?

We have reason to bless the dear Lord for leaving these precious words on record for our encouragement. They have been so to me many times, particularly in the first steps of my pilgrimage; yes, and in after stages too, when darkness has pervaded my mind, when corruptions have raged, when the enemy has tempted, when the Lord has withdrawn his sensible presence, when left to grapple with the powers of darkness, when sin has abounded, when the will seemingly has been going over to the side of the enemy, when all has appeared dark and dismal, when I have seemed to be given up to a reprobate mind, when no spirituality has appeared in my heart, when according to sight, sense, and reason there has seemed nothing in me or about me but carnality and sensuality. How to form a right judgment of myself, I knew not,

not knowing at that time where all this crop came from, or from what principle it sprang. But, blessed be God, he has shown me since, and kept a lively sense of it in my heart, "that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; that when I would do good, evil is present with me; and how to perform that which is good I find not." It is a great mercy to know these things, and to know where our strength lies, whence all our fruit is found, where help has been laid, where comfort and consolation are to be obtained; on what foundation we are built, and to whom we are to apply for aid, succour, and support in every time of need. Then why cry out so often as we do, "I am too vile, too unworthy, too filthy, and too base a creature for the Lord ever to look upon; surely he will not, he cannot regard the prayer of such a one as myself?" Look at Mary Magdalene, Manasseh, Paul, and others, if such are your feelings. What was there in them for the Lord to show mercy unto, and to grant unto them a free, full, and finished salvation? It must be free indeed, in every sense of the word, or they had never obtained it. Neither should we. "The Lord hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." And what is all this for? "That no flesh should glory in his presence."

I was greatly struck last evening in hearing the chapter read whence the portion was taken, Luke vii. 35: "But wisdom is justified of all her children;" in which chapter we have the words most sweetly and blessedly exemplified in the character above-mentioned, namely, Mary Magdalene. "And behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping; and began to wash his feet with her tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head; and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment." O how precious were these words to my poor soul! How clearly did I see the moving cause of all this love in Mary's heart toward her dear and loving Saviour; what prompted her to take such a step, what her feelings were, what an overflowing sense of love she was under! Nothing too great, too costly, or too precious to be bestowed on her Saviour. My soul caught the flame of heavenly and divine love, it sprang up instantly in my soul, and I had a most sweet and blessed time of it in prayer; my spirit was truly humbled within me. It was no doubt from the same fountain fulness, the same Jesus, the same blessed anointing of the Holy Spirit, the same sympathy, love, and affection drawn out to the same Object of faith, ground of hope, source of all real happiness and eternal salvation. I entered by the same precious faith into Mary's feelings, enjoyed the same love in a measure, and felt fully persuaded all was right between God and my own soul. I went to bed, lying with the heavenly dew sweetly and powerfully distilling upon me, and meditated and contemplated upon it, till beloved sleep led me into the land of forgetfulness. Here is some of God's wisdom,

mercy, grace, and goodness displayed in one of the foolish things of this world, weak things, base things, yea, and things of nought, nothing creatures, less than nothing, and in himself lighter than vanity. "O the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Simon, the Pharisee, could not find it; it was hidden from him; he knew it not; neither did he nor could he enter the least into Mary's rich experience. But says Christ, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." He still condescends to eat and drink with sinners; he still shows forth his loving heart, displays the riches of his grace, magnifies his mercy, sheds abroad his love in our souls, wins us to himself, gains the whole of our affections, and thereby sweetly constrains us to make a free, full, and absolute surrender of ourselves unto him both for time and eternity.

Yours in the bond of love, and your willing servant in Christ Jesus,

JAMES LEWIS.

Chichester, October 30, 1847.

HOLINESS, OR SANCTIFICATION.

It is the "truth" that makes us "free." And all error has a power of bondage in it. I shall briefly declare my sentiments on the above subject. And as I have learnt them by being tossed up and thrust down, in heights and depths of unfeigned sorrow and joy on that and other subjects, by the Spirit of God in my soul, they so far are entitled to respect. If anything be revealed unto another, he may, as one, speak; and others are authorized to judge; and will, if the Spirit bless, be edified.

It is a common expression, that the blood and righteousness of Christ imputed, or made over by gift, to any one, is salvation. And so they are. And wherever they are imputed, the holiness of Christ is also imputed. If any man thinks that, if he has the blood and righteousness of Christ imputed, he shall, over and above that, ever have in this life an inwrought holiness also worked in him to perfectly satisfy God, it is a mistake. For there must be first a perfect holiness in us or on us, to begin with, to satisfy justice. And this must be received by us by imputation or gift. How long was I distressed by seeing holiness and sanctification to be inwrought in us! And overlooked that there was a holiness or sanctification to be received by us as a beggar receives alms. I am that beggar. And have received by *gift* or imputation from Christ his sanctification. I am certain of it that it is so. Make the tree good. This is done by receiving Christ, putting on Christ, being rooted and grounded in him. How glorious does the dripping vitality of Christ make all our natures new if we are engrafted into him! See here, ye poor despairing wretches, that ye are complete in Christ, without either thought, word, or deed of inwrought holiness in you. Of this I am more than confident. Christ's holiness is as perfect and as wide as the law. Happy is the soul that is a partaker of it.

Does morality suffer from this? No. There is a constraining and enabling power wherever Christ's holiness is felt. I have felt it so. There is a mortifying, crucifying, and deadening power in Christ's holiness, felt by gift, towards all sin. I have felt it so. As long as I was working an inwrought holiness (over and above Christ's blood and righteousness imputed) to satisfy justice, I was unhappy. Secondly, I had the motions of sin more fierce and untameable. But when I was enabled to see and feel my *all* to be in Christ, my holiness as well as righteousness and atoning blood, how soothing, how becalming, what a rest, how gentle, and how sweet to my panting and withered soul!

I am more and more convinced that what Mr. Romaine said is true, that by "self-righteousness, new-christened holiness," you may kick Christ and free grace out of doors.

Salvation is either by grace or it is not. It is the saved man only that can *act* acceptably in God's sight. And a man is saved by grace, without either holiness or sanctification inwrought in him whatever; and to this I would stand to the last drop of my blood.

Secondly. Wherever Christ's holiness, as well as blood and righteousness, is felt and known by gift or imputation, *there* the Holy Spirit is given, and the new man of the heart is formed. This, and this only, is an everlasting embankment against the grace of God being turned into licentiousness; and, what is more remarkable still, is thus the only way to bring forth any or much fruit unto God.

A man cannot *act* before he lives. A man to live to God must first be fast engrafted into Christ. Before that is done, away with the notion of any one bearing fruit unto God. He may bear the sour fruits of morality; sour unto God, though benefiting unto man. Arminian holiness is thus nothing but sour morality squeezed out of the crabs of nature.

Where a man is engrafted into Christ, he partakes of the rich olive tree, the Lord Jesus Christ; and by free grace and free gift becomes a partaker of all the Lord Jesus has and is (as far as communicable)! O rich and transcendent scene! My soul is all on fire when I think of it. "To grow up into Him in all things!" Completeness cannot be added unto! And ye are "complete in Him" by gifts and imputation, whether it be holiness, blood, wisdom, or righteousness; all is Christ's; and ye are his, all ye elect; and the elect are a broken-hearted and a broken-spirited people.

I say again, Are the interests of outward consistency, propriety, and becomingness of life and conversation; are the ornaments of inward godly thoughts and feelings, done away by this doctrine of Christ's holiness *given* to us by *gift* and imputation, and not inwrought in us? No; by no means. Quite the contrary. A man must be *first* made a vine-branch, before he can grow anything good. How else can grapes be grown? We are thorns and thistles by nature. We must be grafted; and if grafted into Christ, we become partakers of him, of all he is and has.

Thus we become good, holy, and sanctified by our engraftation into Christ actually, before we produce any actual fruit. The branch

exists before the fruit; and the branch makes us holy. And a healthy vine-branch will as naturally grow grapes as an Arminian will grow hips and haws and brambleberries. For "a tree is known by its fruit." How else are we to know it?

These grapes or *fruits* of righteousness, acceptable unto God through Jesus Christ, are the only difference, as regards fruit, between the quickened elect and the sour and morose efforts of the non-elect as regards fruit. One is the fruit of love; the other is the low and base fruit of slavish fear. One is produced by a slave in chains; the other is the happy and spontaneous effort of a free and generous nature, from the engraftation into the Son of God.

Without any one is first a *partaker* of Christ's holiness imputed, farewell to any thoughts of gospel holiness as fruits and effects. As soon could a thorn produce olive berries, or a snake be taken for a sheep.

What is the end, then, of this scribble? It is this: that the holiness of Christ imputed to us makes us to have a new nature; his blood washes away our sins; his active righteousness meritoriously beautifies us; and his adorable wisdom, also given us, shows us and makes us feel that Christ is "MADE OF GOD unto us wisdom, righteousness, holiness, and redemption." (1 Cor. i.) And that holiness there mentioned stands on the very same ground of imputation, free gift, reckoned and counted by grace, without any inwrought work in us, as the three others, "wisdom, righteousness, and redemption."

Again: There is a secondary holiness springing from the above: "Having, therefore, these promises, (of completeness in Christ without works,) let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord." Again: "Be ye holy in all manner of conversation; for I am holy." And I am as certain as the Bible is true, that where the first holiness of Christ by imputation is, the second holiness inwrought in us must and will follow as naturally, as the echo follows the voice. For "ye have your fruit (not the cause) unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

And if I was dying, as a real saint is a bungler at sin, I could say this much of this secondary holiness in me as fruits of the first, namely, That I would not, in thought, word, or deed, sin intentionally and deliberately in the sight of God or man. *Neither could I:* nor any one altogether among the quickened elect. For this good reason: "Because their seed remaineth in them:" that incorruptible seed; that beauteous principle by which the God of love quickened their souls into Christ. And that immortal principle grows within them, *constraining* them to live, not unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them. I am sure I can speak feelingly on this subject: for I hate my own life on account of the disallowed-of, unwilling, watched-against, and resisted imperfections I am the struggling subject of; and look with glee and tranquillity to that blessed time when the whole body of sin shall be destroyed, and when holiness, the love of which pants and struggles within me, shall be delivered from a body of death. In the mean time, watchfulness, willingness

to do or undo whatever God wishes, desiring through grace to be as softened clay in the hands of the potter, to receive every impression the God of the Bible wishes: desires of this kind, to be enabled to fully cleanse our way by scripturally, through the Spirit, taking heed thereto, will make a man not asbamed, when Arminians and Antinomians will be buried in one general ruin.

Finally, Neither do I make this scribble, as I observed or hinted before, to lessen the secondary holiness as fruits of the first. Solid practice must have a solid root. Gospel self-denial, seeking the good of others, renunciation and denial of all sin as well as of self-righteousness, will more or less solidly and satisfactorily follow the partaking of Christ. I have found it so, as I observed. For among the ten thousand dangers to the kingdom of heaven, every slip or fall in thought or word is watched against by me through constraining love, that every thought may be brought into captivity to my beloved Lord Jesus; and that every scripture, of the roughest and most severe sort to the flesh, may hew me all to pieces both for omission and commission of aught as regards good and evil, as revealed in Scripture. Working from and not for salvation thus will, from so noble a ground as salvation and completeness in Christ without inwrought works, squeeze, as it were, the love of God in the soul; so that the constraints of love and gratitude, while on the one hand they wither and kill the roots of sin within us, so they also constrain to outward practice; insomuch so, that as grace in imputed sanctification, &c., should be carried to the tip-top point, or else God is robbed and lies are preached; so, on the other hand, the Scriptures are twisted and wrested, if the precepts, as the consequences of the former, are not carried to the tip-top point also, let it hew and slash whom it may; if the cap fits, let them wear it. And God has appointed his gifts of repentance, humble confession, and gospel amendment, (things that I am always more or less, in thought, word, or deed, engaged at,) to gospelly rectify every imperfection in the sight of God and man; so that that scripture, as every other, has its fulfilment in time: "Yea, what clearing of yourselves; yea, what zeal; yea, what indignation; yea, what revenge against self! so that ye have shown yourselves clear in this matter."

Abingdon.

I. K.

SORROW AND COMFORT; OR, CONFLICTS AND TRIUMPHS THE COMMON LOT OF ALL REAL BELIEVERS.

BY JOHN RUSK.

"The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy."—PROV. xiv. 10.

(Continued from page 259.)

Finally, this joy springs from the security we have for all these invaluable blessings. I say, the security and firm basis that they are all founded upon is a source of great joy. A few days ago I awoke early in the morning, and had a most blessed view by faith of the

security of all God's family; and what crowned all was this, believing that I was one of that happy number. I cannot relate it as I saw it then; there was such a glory shone into my soul as is impossible to describe.

Now, let us look a little at this security. It is God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one living and true God, who only is omnipotent, almighty. Now, this blessed Being has set his heart and soul upon a certain number of the human race, known only to himself and in his eternal mind. Knowing the end from the beginning, he foresaw their fall in Adam with all the non-elect. But there are innumerable difficulties and dangerous enemies that must be conquered ere they can be recovered from this dreadful fall. Yet, seeing that the Almighty, the Omnipotent Jehovah has engaged in this great work, who or what can disannul it or make it void? None. Here, then, is our security.

1. Well then, the holy three Divine Persons entered into covenant in behalf of the church, which covenant was confirmed by oath. A covenant is an agreement between parties. There are conditions in it. Now, God the Father entered into covenant with his dear Son, as it is written, "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant." (Psalm lxxxix. 3.) This was the order of the covenant. God the Father agreed to give the church to Christ: "Thine they were, (in this order,) and thou gavest them me."

But it was upon certain conditions. They were deeply plunged into sin by the fall, had broken God's law, were enemies to God, exposed to his wrath and eternal destruction, and were under the power and dominion of Satan, sin, and death. Now, God the Son, co-equal with the Father and the Holy Ghost, agreed to become incarnate, to clothe himself with our nature; that he would be born of a virgin, and take our nature from her, pure, without sin; and that his divine Person should be united to that pure nature in the virgin's womb. Thus he was One Person with two natures, not two persons: "Immanuel, God with us," or God in our nature. And in this great work he agreed to obey God's holy law for his elect, and make it honourable, satisfy divine justice, appease God's wrath, destroy Satan, sin, death, and the grave, and lay down his life as a ransom. This being agreed to, a body was prepared for him. "He was set up," &c., in God's eternal purpose. These, briefly, were the conditions.

Now, the blessings promised were, to place every branch of his obedience by imputation to their account, which in time should be revealed and made known to them by the Holy Ghost; and finally, that every soul whom he undertook to save, should be brought safe home to everlasting glory above, to sing salvation to God and the Lamb through the countless ages of eternity. And when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, and he accomplished the whole work. ●

This is a summary of that covenant which was ratified and con-

firmed by the oath of God. "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him." (Psalm lxxxix. 28.) "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." (Verses 34—36.) Ah! says the poor tried and tempted believer, who feels a back-sliding heart daily, I am afraid that God will never have mercy upon one so vile as I am; my sins are so exceedingly great, sins against light and love. O how I am held down by these enemies! And if I see and feel myself so black, how must a just and holy God see me? In answer to all this, take his own word: "Thus saith Jehovah, If the heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out from beneath, I will also cut off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord." (Jer. xxxi. 37.) Then what security we have! Here is a work entered into by Jehovah, who is omnipotent, a covenant sworn to, and well ordered in all things, and sure. Then it is impossible for a believer to fall out of this covenant, although he must be well chastened for all his folly. Here is security, and here is cause for real joy.

2. But again, if we look at the *foundation* the church is built upon, what cause for joy! Not a creature-Saviour. O no; he is God. Not by office, but Jehovah: "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stouë, a sure foundation." (Isaiah xxviii. 16.) It is the same that Christ told Peter of, and which Peter confessed: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Yes, Peter, and upon me, the Son of the living God—upon me, the Rock which you have confessed, will I "build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Seeing, then, that God in three Persons, who formed the plan, is omnipotent; that the covenant is confirmed by oath, and ordered in all things; that all the sins of God's family cannot alter it; and that Christ is Jehovah, upon whom the church is built, is there not a solid foundation for joy? Truly there is.

3. Again, *God is unchangeable*. This is another source of comfort: "I am God, and change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Ah! say you, it is all true; but O! if you knew as much of me as I know of myself, you would never more take notice of me, or conclude that I had part and lot in the matter. Why, what is it that so particularly distresses you as to cause you to write bitter things against yourself? O! it is the sin of my nature, the secret love of things in my heart that I would not tell any soul living of; and when the temptation comes, even in the midst of my best devotion, I am carried away by it against light! And you know the Scripture says, "If we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there is no more sacrifice for sin." And, "His own iniquities shall take the wicked, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sin." Let me ask you a question: Did you ever have a discovery to your heart of God's love at any

one time? Yes, I certainly have, when I could say with Peter, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." Very good; well, after this have you thus secretly fallen into temptation, as you say, against light? Yes, I have. Well, and after that have you ever felt this love? Yes, I really have. Well then, I must tell you that, notwithstanding all your complaints, grace reigns, and shall reign; and although a troop may overcome Gad, yet he shall overcome at last. These things are to teach you and me our utter weakness, and the strength and power of sin, and what it would do were it not for the grace of God. Truly you and I would commit publicly all uncleanness with greediness. O what debtors are we to the grace of God! But we shall be tempted, and very often slip. Yet never can we fall away. These things keep us from a self-righteous spirit, and cut at our pride. They also keep our base original in view, and humble us in secret before the Lord. Could you go on as you wish, you might trust in some measure to your goings, and so lay your circumspection as some ground of your hope, a rock whereon thousands have split. But now you have nothing in yourself to trust to; so that you are kept from confidence in your own tabernacle. Moreover, as there is nothing that can possibly be new to God, he certainly could tell, even when he gave you that discovery of his love, how your heart would backslide from him. You will agree to this, will you not? Certainly, say you. Well, if God knew this, and yet this knowledge did not prevent his giving you such a discovery, why should it now, seeing that he is unchangeable, and that his gifts and callings are without repentance? Now, look into all this, and may it encourage you against despair.

I know this is hard work, but we must either go on in such a state, or be at ease in Zion, and be under a woe of wrath. This state is called a fight, and it will continue until death. I find some temptation while writing. Paul says, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." Why so? Because Satan hates doing good, and therefore stirs up the evils of our nature in order to stop it.

4. But, again. We are secured by *the mercy of God in Jesus Christ*. This is another firm basis for every tried and tempted soul to trust to, to lean upon, and the ground of solid joy. "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting;" and, "Mercy shall be built up for ever." Here is an unfathomable ocean. You and I have tried the mercy of God greatly since we have known him. O! I never could have thought that I should have acted so basely as I have to my best Friend; and yet his mercy stands fast. Wonderful! David well knew this, as you may see, all through the Psalms, especially in the 136th, the twenty-six verses of which he finishes with, "His mercy endureth for ever."

5. Again, His *love*. Here we are secured again, for this also is everlasting: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." And this love never changes. It is true, we go through a variety of changes.

But where will you find one text in God's book to prove that his love to his elect changes? None. As the hymn beautifully says,

"My soul through many changes goes,
"His love no variation knows."

To say that a man may be a child of God to-day and a child of the devil to-morrow, is no better than blasphemy; making an unchangeable God a changeable Being, and pouring contempt upon the finished work of Christ. It is turning things upside down, and endeavouring to establish the will of the creature, which is bent to his own destruction. But, blessed be God, we have no such false Christs to worship. Our Saviour is the eternal God; and "having loved his own which are in the world, he loveth them unto the end;" and after that time ends, he loves to all eternity. The height of this love is glory above, the residence of God; the depths, raising us from what we justly deserved, everlasting destruction in the bottomless pit; the length of this love, from eternity to eternity; and the breadth of this love is like God himself, immensity. And thus we are for ever secured. And although many waters try, yet they never can quench this love, nor can the floods drown it.

6. Again, The *faithfulness* of God is a security to our firm standing. O what a blessed thing it is that we have to trust a faithful God!

This takes in several things. First, *his word of promise*. He will never go from that. No; he will chasten us from our sins, which we constantly procure, and he will reveal his love to us, which is all free, sovereign, and unmerited; and in all this his faithfulness is to be seen. Hence he says, "I will visit their sins with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless, my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven." (Psalm lxxxix. 32, 37.) But this is not all.

Are you called of God? If so, you prove his faithfulness, for "faithful is he who hath called you." Why so? Because he then made his promise good to you, wherein he said, "I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth."

Again. Are you saved from the power of Satan, sin, death, and wrath? Why is it? Because God had promised it: "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation," and he has made it good: "This is a faithful saying, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners."

Again. Are you tempted? so was Christ, and we are to follow his steps. And how is it that you never shall finally be overcome? Why, "he is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able." And remember, our ability is not in ourselves, but in Christ Jesus. "Strong in the Lord." And he will with the temptation make a way for your escape.

Once more. "He is faithful, who will establish you, and keep you from evil." (2 Thess. ii. 3.) And not only what I have mentioned,

but every thing relative to the church of God and promised in his word, he will punctually fulfil; for "faithful is he who hath promised, who also will do it."

In all these things, therefore, there is a solid foundation for real joy. Hence Paul says that "by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, (his oath and promises,) we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold of the hope set before us;" and, "We rejoice in hope of the glory of God," because the basis is so firm.

(To be continued.)

LETTERS FROM A FATHER TO A SON.

No. III.

My beloved Son,—Who I hope is still "inquiring his way to Zion, with his face thitherward;" "through evil report and good report;" following those who "through faith and patience now inherit the promises;" grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied to thee abundantly, through the merits of our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

It is some time now since I wrote a few lines to you; but I hope you do not think it is from any slight, or that it is "out of sight, out of mind." Nothing of the kind; for though I have been absent in writing and in body, I am very often present in spirit, joying, and beholding thy order and the steadfastness of thy faith, however weak it may be "because of the way."

"Bless'd soul that can say, Christ only I seek!
Wait for him always; be constant, though weak.
The Lord whom thou seekest will not tarry long,
And to him the weakest is dear as the strong."

My prayer to God for thee is, that he would in mercy preserve thy "going out and coming in from henceforth and for evermore;" be the Guide of thy youth and the Director of thy every step and situation in life; that he may cause thee continually to commit the keeping of body, soul, and circumstances into his hands, as "into the hands of a faithful Creator;" and persuade thee that "he is able to keep that which thou hast committed unto him" in life and death. For I know that such is the nature of the flesh, "in which dwelleth no good thing,"

"That snares and dangers will beset,
For we are but travellers yet.
As the way indeed is hard,
Let us keep a constant guard;
"Neither lifted up with air,
Nor dejected to despair;
Always keeping Christ in view,
He will bring us safely through."

Who can tell the power the devil possesses, or the wiles he uses, to draw souls into sin, or to entangle them in his infernal net, that he may drown them, if possible by any means, in destruction and perdition? But dust and ashes shall be the serpent's meat; upon

his belly shall he go, and cursed shall he be all the days of his life. O! his subtle, wily way of working upon the corrupt and depraved nature of God's saints, setting it to lust after evil things, is mysterious. Through where and what have I not been dragged by this serpent, "which is more subtle than all the beasts of the earth!" or in other words, all the men in the world, good or bad, putting them altogether. And, O lamentable to say,

"Ten thousand baits this foe prepares,
To catch the wandering heart;
And seldom do we see the snares,
Before we feel the smart."

His modes of attack are so varied and shifting, that they are almost imperceptible. Like his beloved children, Balak and Balaam, if he cannot succeed in one place by one temptation, he will change his baits, and in effect say, 'Come ye to another. And, O lamentable to state, though all for wise ends and purposes, he has been permitted to succeed in a few instances most awfully, as with David, Solomon, Peter, &c., who were all holy men of God and are now in heaven, redeemed and saved by the precious blood of Christ, clothed in his imputed righteousness, and "without spot before him in love." And why were these things (hateful and detestable to God in themselves) permitted to take place, and the devil so to prevail over corrupt nature? I should humbly think for his own glory, "according to the riches of his grace by Christ Jesus," and for our humility throughout all ages of the world, that he that has the harness on may never boast as he that putteth it off. It shows us our momently dependance upon Christ for grace and keeping. It says, "Be not high-minded, but fear;" "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." It was not permitted to teach any to "sin that grace may abound. God forbid." Nor was it permitted to teach any to say, as good old Bunyan represents some licentious libertines as saying, David did so-and-so, and why may not we? No. God forbid. But to teach us "not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought, but to think soberly." And it ought to teach us, "if a brother be overtaken in a fault, to restore such a one in the spirit of meekness," considering ourselves also in the flesh. And lastly, I think it was permitted to confound and baffle all the followers of Arminius, with their false principles of perfection in the flesh, which is contrary to the holy war between the law of the members (the old man) and the renewed mind, as related by Paul in his 7th chapter to the Romans.

An Arminian (I should think of thirty years' standing) once said to me, "Ah, Joseph, convert thy soul and sanctify old nature." The old man might as well have put me in a deaf and dumb asylum; for I could neither hear nor answer such nonsense. I was worse plagued with old, unsanctified nature and the devil working upon and tempting it, than when I was dead in sin and not converted at all. Now, see how these old Pharisees will lay heavy burdens on men's shoulders too grievous to be borne; though through ignorance of spiritual matters, blinded by the devil, they touch

them not with one of their fingers; so ignorant are they of the flesh and the Spirit, and the war between them, typified by the twins, Esau and Jacob, struggling together in the womb. And this war, more or less, is felt by every child of God born into the spiritual world. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other;" so that a child of God "cannot do the things which he would." And so it will be to the end. It cannot be cured, therefore (with humility be it spoken) must be endured. Poor Jeremiah said, in the bitterness of his heart, "This is a grief, but I must bear it." And so may every child of God say, for bear it he must: "For the creature was made subject to vanity, *not willingly*, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope" of a perfect deliverance from it. But for the present we groan under it, being burdened with it. And the devil will distress us all he can with guilt on account of it, and accuse us day and night before God. But the God of all grace will bruise Satan under our feet shortly; for the present, however, thanks be to God, who always causes us to triumph in Christ.

But let us not be mistaken here, by misunderstanding the apostle, as though we were continually able to triumph and rejoice, lest Satan take an advantage of us on this ground; but I apprehend the apostle to mean, Let heaviness be upon us through manifold temptations, and sins and trials of every sort press our poor souls down to the earth, so that we go mourning without the sun, and so hard is the battle sometimes with the devil that we hardly know which way it will turn, and are ready to give it up as lost, and wish we never had been born; yet as often as the Lord raises us up, delivers us, and pities us, "knowing our frame, that we are but dust," and reveals a precious Jesus to us, the efficacy of his blood and righteousness, the pitying and sympathizing love of his heart, we triumph in Christ; for we find such virtue and efficacy in his precious, holy, and balmy blood, that it is

"A sovereign balm for every wound,
A cordial for our fears."

"Blessings for ever on the Lamb,
Who bore the curse for wretched men;
Let angels sound his sacred name,
And every creature say, Amen."

So says the scribbler of these few lines, who at times, notwithstanding that changes and war are against him, "rejoices in hope of the glory of God." And so I conclude abruptly, with all our loves and good wishes to thee, remembering thee always in our poor prayers, with all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth. J. B.

Bath, Feb. 27, 1842.

A LETTER FROM THE LATE JOHN KEYT.

Dear and Well Beloved,—A long season has elapsed since I received your valuable epistle, richly fraught with the various exercises of the wayfaring man, heaven-born and heaven-bound. When I ventured to address a few lines to you, my desire was to draw out of

your earthen vessel a portion of that choice treasure which I felt persuaded the Lord had deposited therein. This my desire was accomplished, and it proved sweet to my soul, seeing you have communicated to me things new and old, both in the heights and in the depths,—the heights of God's distinguishing, discriminating, and sovereign grace towards you, and the depths of human depravity innate in the recipient of his grace, as exhibited in the experience of your own soul.

Al! my beloved friend and brother, this chequered path is all the Lord's own work and way of acting with his redeemed family, and it is "marvellous in our eyes." Our dear Lord and Saviour's great undertaking, when he humbled himself in the assumption of our nature, was "to seek and to save that which was lost." He came "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;" yea, the very chief of sinners. If this had not been his mission and commission, you and I should have remained for ever in the congregation of the dead. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ;" and all of sovereign grace and free mercy.

In the manifestations of his wonderful mercy and grace, the Lord Jesus Christ came where we were, sought us out, and gathered us up. He found us in a waste, howling wilderness, cast out to the loathing of our persons, in our blood, defiled, polluted, and lost; it was then that he passed by and saw us in this deplorable state, and said unto us, "Live." This was a time of love indeed, when in infinite kindness he thoroughly cleansed us; for "according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." This was all the Lord's own work, we had no hand in it; his divine power wrought it, and he continues to maintain it in the midst of all opposition, either from the devil or indwelling sin.

But O what manifold spiritual decays, what wanderings, how many backslidings, what days of darkness, what diversities of changes have befallen me since divine life and love first took possession of this soul of mine! Yet, notwithstanding all these changes that have passed over me, here I am to this day, the living monument of his unchanging love and never-failing compassions.

I am often in the dust and lying among the potsherds; but he comes again, and raises up my poor soul out of the dust, and lifts the needy beggar from the dunghill, causing me to mount up again as on the wings of a dove: "For thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor." Hitherto the Lord hath helped me; and there are seasons, when favoured with his gracious visitations, that I am enabled to believe, in the midst of all this chequered work, that I am in the footsteps of the flock, and in "the path of the just, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day;" because I do at times experience and enjoy the precious manifestations of the love of God in Christ Jesus. This path of the just I believe is the dear Lord himself: "I am (saith he) the way, the truth, and the life;" for when, after a long walking in darkness, conflicting with Satan and indwelling sin, when the hope of seeing brighter and better days seems ready to give up the ghost, then it pleases him again to revisit our forlorn

and drooping souls with the light of his blessed countenance, and we are assured that He is "the path of the just," for he shines more gloriously than ever in our eyes and affections.

However, now, in my latter stages, I find that the days of darkness are many, yet not all, for there are seasons when the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing and comfort in his wings. This dispels the darkness and drives the beasts of the forest to their dens. And when this is the case the harp is taken down from the willows, and we again go forth in the dances of them that make merry. But when another dark change takes place with me, down I sink again, dejected, miserable, and disquieted; for I find that "in the light of the King's countenance there is life," and no where else besides; "and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain."

When I first received your valuable epistle it was pondered over with many meltings of spirit: and though exercised with much weakness and bodily infirmity, which has hitherto prevented my acknowledgment of it, yet I was sure it contained rich food for poor tried souls, and the perusal of it was followed with these words: "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days."

Accordingly, under this impression, (without mentioning the name of the author,) I wrote several copies of it and sent them where I knew they would be acceptable. In answer to one of them I received the following lines:

"The Lord was so pleased to bless the perusal of yours and your friend's letters, that it caused thanksgiving and praise to God for his wonderful ways and gracious dealings with his own redeemed ones. Your friend's letter so expressed what my soul has gone through of late, that I said within me, "Surely this blessed minister has travailed for my soul, in so expressing what my late experience has been, having thought previously that no one ever could have felt as I did that truly belonged to God. Such horrid thoughts against Christ, the Chief among ten thousand once in my heart; yet David gave me some light where he says, 'Whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; and if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.' 'Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is high, I cannot attain unto it,' &c. Pray give my kind respects to your friend when you write again. May the Lord increase you more and more, for his own glory and your soul's good. Amen."

This, dear sir, came from an old pilgrim in Zion's ways; and whether in thus revealing your communications I have acted right or wrong I must submit to your judgment; but hope, if wrong, thou wilt pardon thy servant, for in the integrity of my heart have I done this.

Upon the reception of your choice epistle I said to myself, "This requires no answer, for it carries an answer in its own bosom." Yet upon reflection I judged that it would be very ungrateful not to acknowledge so great a favour; and as I understood that, if it please God, you intend to visit London shortly, I thought, if spared to see

you again, I must stand self-condemned if admitted into your presence; and this was one motive that prompted me to trouble you with this poor scrap.

May the dear Lord in his condescending goodness send you unto the London part of his heritage "in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of peace," that both sower and reapers may rejoice together. Please to remember me in loving kindness to all the Lord's disciples at Trowbridge; and at the throne of grace do not forget,

JOHN KEYT.

April 5th, 1836.

[John Keyt, we have heard, was one of the choicest and most savoury of Huntington's hearers.]

O B I T U A R Y .

Dear Sirs,—Many of the readers of the "Gospel Standard" had some knowledge of the late Mr. Cooper, formerly of Chesham, who finished his earthly pilgrimage on Monday, October 8th, 1849. Speaking of him and of his last end, a friend, who enjoyed his friendship during the latter months of his life, says,

"To him Christ was everything. This spirit was more apparent at the close of his life. I spent upwards of an hour with him in spiritual conversation on the day he died; and I may say that it was the happiest season I ever enjoyed with him. His anticipations of heaven and glory were bright and clear; and when asked if he found that gospel which he had for so many years preached to others to be the comfort and solace of his own soul, he replied thus: 'What I have preached to others is now my *only* hope and comfort; and my whole dependance for salvation is upon the blood and righteousness of my blessed Redeemer; for I am but a very unprofitable servant, and only a sinner saved by grace.' Tears followed these expressions, which to me bespoke the true feelings of his soul. I read many suitable portions of the word of God, to which he responded, adding some other passages to strengthen and explain those which were read or quoted.

"After commending him to God in prayer, he took my hand, and with a smile said, 'I can join you from my heart in every sentence you have uttered; and may the blessed Lord make you his honoured instrument in bringing many sons to glory.'

"His last words to me (of any note) were, when asked if Christ was precious, '*He is precious to my soul.*' He repeated during the day the 83rd Hymn in 'Gadsby's Selection,' and said this was his soul's experience:

" 'How oft have sin and Satan strove
To rend my soul from thee, my God!
But everlasting is thy love,
And Jesus seals it with his blood!

“The oath and promise of the Lord
Join to confirm the wondrous grace:
Eternal power performs the word,
And fills all heaven with endless praise!

“Amidst temptations sharp and long,
My soul to this dear refuge flies:
Hope is my anchor, firm and strong,
While tempests blow and billows rise,

“The gospel bears my spirits up!
A faithful and unchanging God
Lays the foundation of my hope,
In oaths, and promises, and blood!”

“I cannot help adding my firm conviction that he is now with his Lord and Saviour, in whose presence there ‘is fulness of joy,’ and at his ‘right hand pleasures for evermore.’ May I thus ‘die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!’”

Mr. Cooper died on Monday, the 8th of October, 1849, at half-past seven in the evening. The last Sabbath in September he preached twice at Cheshunt, which terminated his ministry.

POETRY.

Thou glorious Prince of Peace,
My peace is all in thee!
How soon all conflicts cease,
When thou dost smile on me!
Thou art my Hope, my Joy, my Rest;
In thee I am completely blest.

O could I praise thy name
For all thy matchless love!
Thy glories I'll proclaim
When I am safe above:
But, ah! I want to praise thee now;
I would, but, Lord, I know not how!

When wilt thou call me home,
And set my spirit free;
That I no more may roam,
My dearest Lord, from thee?
I know while on this earth I stay
My heart is prone to go astray.

This earth is not my rest,
And here I cannot stay;
I long to join the blest
In realms of endless day:
O for some messenger of love
To bear my ransom'd soul above!

Yet, Lord, if 'tis thy will
That I must longer stay,
O teach me to be still,
And all thy will obey!
Subdue my will, and let me lie
Content to live, or pleased to die.

Didst thou not live for me
 A life of grief and pain,
 Of woe and misery?
 And shall I dare complain?
 No, dearest Lord, while thou art nigh
 I cannot raise a murmuring sigh.

But O if thou depart,
 And I am left alone,
 I dread my treacherous heart,
 To evil always prone!
 Who knows how far I yet may stray
 From thee, my God, my Life, my Way?

Thou knowst how far I've gone,
 How far I yet may go;
 It is thy power alone
 Can keep me safe, I know:
 But thou, dear Shepherd of thy sheep,
 Canst both restore and safely keep.

Keep me, my Lord, my Life;
 O keep me near thy side!
 Keep me from lawless strife;
 Let me in thee abide:
 Nor wound again that tender heart
 That for my sins so deep did smart.

C. M.

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

I beseech you in the Lord, give more pains and diligence to fetch heaven than the country sort* of lazy professors, who think their own godliness best, because it is their own; and content themselves with custom and course, with a resolution to summer and winter in that sort of profession which the multitude and the times favour most, and are still dressing, and clipping, and carving their faith, according as it may best stand with their summer now and a whole skin; and so breathe out both hot and cold in God's matter, according to the course of the times. This is the compass they sail toward heaven by, instead of a better. — *Rutherford*.

Here is ground for faith and hope, in that as all things are given to Christ, so this inexhaustible fulness in him is not for himself, but to be dispensed and communicated to poor sinners; for here is the Father's giving all things to the Son, as Mediator betwixt God and man. You will say, There is fulness enough in Christ; but what is that to me? Why it wholly concerns thee; it is treasured up in Christ for sinners; yea, for the worst of sinners, that they may believe in him, and receive all things in him and with him: "He hath received gifts for men." (Ps. lxxviii. 18.) Ah! say you, but I am a rebellious devil. Well, it is even for the rebellious. Hence also, (Eph. i. 22,) "he is head over all things to the church;" he hath "all things in his hand." — *Ralph Erskine*.

* General kind.

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 a 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. 10.

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GOD'S FAITHFULNESS TO HIS PROMISES.

A DISCOURSE ON ACTS xxvii. 25.

“I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.”—Acts xxvi. 25.

(Concluded from page 302.)

But I return. It is not a strange thing for some of the sharply tried family to hear the voice of Jehovah in their soul, making some promise, revealing some mystery, administering some consolation, or giving some warning. And when this voice is heard in the heart God works faith in that heart concerning it. This faith goes through a variety of movements and exercises; and of the exercises I will now attempt to write a little. This forms my second general head.

II. *The exercise or work of faith.* Now, Paul had heard God speaking to him by his angel concerning the circumstances into which he was brought; and this was the ground and authority on which he fixed his faith. Hence comes forth the exercise of his faith concerning the promise: “I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.” And although wind and tide made against it, yet Paul knew that God held the winds in his fist, and took up the seas in the hollow of his hand; and that he would control all to the accomplishment of his own word.

We must understand that when our faith gets a view of Jehovah presiding at the helm of all affairs, she will certainly derive strength from such a view; aye, and the more clearly this is revealed in our understanding and soul, the more is faith strengthened and the firmer it stands against all opposing circumstances. But when faith's view

is beclouded by carnal reason, unbelief, cross appearances, spiritual darkness, and Satan working upon any or all of these, faith grows weaker, till she scarcely seems to breathe; though neither Satan nor anything else can finally extinguish this living spark, because they cannot extinguish its living Author.

Now, this faith works best and thrives most when enveloped in contrary and opposing circumstances; for if things appear favourable to our expected end, and we conclude accordingly, this is sight, and not faith; and these two the apostle sets the one against the other; he says, "We walk by faith, not by sight." (2 Cor. v. 7.) But if all things in nature and grace, spiritual and temporal, seem to make war against us, aye, and even God himself hides his face from us; if we then can trust him for the accomplishment of his promises; believe he will appear, and confidently expect him to make crooked things straight and darkness light before us, this is faith, and such faith, too, as God will own and honour, and nothing shall overcome it.

This faith when strong will trust God in the dark as well as in the light. I find it easy to trust him for all he has promised when he shines upon his word, or gives me a light in prayer, or encourages me in hearing; but things go otherwise when he suspends his favours and hides his face. Yet faith, when truly strong, will trust him even here, and will say, "Though clouds and darkness are round about him, (that is, according to our apprehensions,) yet righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." (Psalm cxvii. 2.) Yea, and though in the midst of darkness, she confidently expects to come out to the light again in God's time, and says, "Thou wilt light my candle; the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness." (Psalm xviii. 28.) And to this kind of faith we poor fumbling creatures are exhorted, for the Lord loves it, and says, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him (him that is in darkness) let him trust in the name of the Lord and stay himself upon his God." (Isaiah l. 10.) And if faith be in lively exercise it will do so, for nothing can frighten or move it from its Object. Thus Job declared, though God slew him, yet he would trust in him; which slaying I understand to mean slaying him to all carnal hope, all natural expectation, and all favourable appearances of things, which, indeed, the Lord often does with his people. And then, if they be weak in their faith, they will "faint in this day of adversity;" (Prov. xxiv. 10;) but if they be strong, they will trust him through all, saying, "The Lord killeth and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up." (1 Sam. ii. 6.)

God often sees fit to bring matters about in this way: shutting up every door, and even withholding his own comforting presence, in order that he may secretly lead us to trust to his word alone. Thus Abraham was let go forward in the darkest of providences, by the express command of God, to slay his son, from whose issue alone he could look for the fulfilment of the Lord's promise, "So shall thy seed be." And so Martha and Mary, after they received the promise that their brother's sickness was not unto death, were

enveloped in every appearance that it was, in order that their faith in the Lord's word might be duly tried. And so in Paul's case here, he received the promise that all should get safe to land, yet, according to appearances, "all hope that they should be saved was taken away." (Acts xxvii. 20.) And this is the Lord's ordinary way of communicating, and trying the faith of his people; for upon each repeated victory over gloomy aspects their faith gains more strength, till they become more established in the divine truths of Jehovah, and by his Spirit are led to trust him more firmly.

It is of sheer necessity that every bright prospect should be taken away, as I have hinted, for while one remains, nature is sure to cling to it, nor will she die till every appearance upon which she can place her expectation is gone. Nature, sense, and reason will not give up till every leaning post is taken away; and till they do give up, faith cannot come into full exercise. The Lord therefore strips us of all good appearances, and leaves us nothing but his bare word to rest upon; he then works faith in us to believe it, and ultimately he rewards his own grace.

Hence Paul describes faith as being "the evidence (in us) of things not seen;" (Heb. xi. 1;) that is to say, it evidences to us that such and such things shall be, of which there is no appearance, nor any reasonable expectation, and that such things are, of which there is no evidence to sense; it substantiates to the heart the reality of things beyond sight, and evidences to the soul the certainty of things which all appearances may contradict; and all this simply because it rests solely and entirely on the word or promise of God, believing that it shall be accomplished, though all things else make against such a belief. "He hath said it, and he will do it; he hath spoken it, and he will make it good," (Num. xxiii. 19,) is the ground where faith fixes, where she strikes her fibres, and where she thrives; she eyes the promise, and that only, looking over every appearance, good or bad; for good appearances cannot help her, and bad ones cannot hurt her, she having better footing than either; so that the hymn rightly says,

" Faith, precious faith, the promise sees,
And looks to that alone;
Laughs at impossibilities,
And says, It shall be done."

Now, faith is faith only as it appropriates to the heart the being and attributes of its Object; and the more revelations of this the blessed Spirit makes to the soul, the stronger will faith become. Hence it discovers to the understanding and appropriates to the heart what God is, what he has, and what he wills; and sets up accordingly in the soul a standard of realities which sense can never reach, and at which, therefore, natural men and mere professors so often stumble.

1. It reveals to the understanding *the being of God*. The soul led by faith feels that there is a God, who is ever about him, and who fills all space; that every thought and motive are open and naked to his discerning eye; hence one said, "Thou knowest my downsitting and my uprising, thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Thou

compasseth my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways; for there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." (Psalm cxxxix. 2—4.) Living in a sense of this is the effect of faith in the soul. According to Paul, "Without faith it is impossible to please him, for (mark that) he that cometh to God must believe that he is, (in being,) and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. xi. 6.)

2. Faith discovers to the soul *the sovereignty of God*. In every trouble that we have to pass through, and under every cross, if faith be drawn out, it will discover to us somewhat of the Lord's sovereign power. It will show us how he raises up this and puts down that, according to his will; and if faith be strong it will make us also bow to that sovereignty, as well as acknowledge it; for whether we bow to it or not, and whether we acknowledge it or not, certain it is, that "he will perform all his pleasure." (Isaiah xli. 10.) And it is our mercy if he condescend to send forth his grace with his providence, however crossing, to bring us to acquiesce and rejoice in all his will; which, when he does, he does by drawing forth faith in his sovereign will, so that God says, "Remember the former things of old; for I am God and there is none else, I am God and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsels from a far country; yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass: I have purposed it, I will also do it." (Isa. xli. 9—11.) And we fall in with the declaration and say, "The will of the Lord be done."

3. Faith discovers to us more and more of *the power of God*. We cannot form any right conception of the infinite power of God with our finite minds. We are incapable of grasping so mighty a fact. We hear of the term "almighty" from our very childhood, but to grey hairs we cannot begin to comprehend it. Yet according as faith grows stronger in us, and especially if we are under trial, it will reveal to us more and more of the Lord's power, for we shall daily see more of our need of it; and discovering our own weakness, fly to him who has power sufficient to help us. Faith will show us that he has power to help us, leading every event and circumstance at his command, and controlling all circumstances by the word of his power. Faith to this extent the poor leper had, and said, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." (Luke i. 40.) And here, too, the Lord brought Job when he said, "I know that thou canst do everything." (Job xlii. 2.) Here the power of God was the object of their faith; which faith not only revealed somewhat of it to their heart and understanding, but also appropriated it somewhat to their case, believing that God was able to do for them that which they severally needed.

4. Faith also appropriates to the soul something of *the wisdom of God*. Many times the children of God are led by a way that they know not, and that in the dark too; so that they know not how to set one foot before another; and for the trial of their faith difficul-

ties may surround their way and darkness encompass their soul at the same time. This being so, a sovereign and powerful God is not enough, for power is rather a hindrance than otherwise, if not directed in the right channel; so that here the faith of the child of God fixes upon the wisdom of God, to direct him in all that may be before him in the intricate path in which he is. Hence Daniel's faith fixed upon God's power and wisdom at the same time: "Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever, for wisdom and might are his." (Dan. ii. 20.) Jeremiah's faith did the same, so that he spoke of him as both "great in counsel and mighty in work." (Jer. xxxii. 19.) And Isaiah's faith fixed in just the same place: "This also cometh from the Lord of hosts; he is wonderful in counsel, (there is his wisdom,) and excellent in working," (there is his power.) (Isa. xxviii. 28, 29.) And inasmuch as faith in its exercise never alters, "we have (received) the same spirit of faith." (2 Cor. iv. 13.) We poor children of God, in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty, are of sheer necessity led to the same point, and feel the need of the wisdom of God to direct our way as much as those of old, and the blessedness of it too, when brought home to the soul by faith.

5. But one of the greatest acts of faith is, *closing in with the will of God*. "Thou canst" fixes upon his power, but "thou wilt" enters into his will at the same time. Faith in the will of God is the greatest of all. I have known the times when I could say firmly that I believed God had power and wisdom enough to deliver me; yet I could not close in with his will, and say I believed he *would* deliver me; yet I believe that faith which fixes upon his wisdom, power, and sovereignty will be sure to rise up and fix on his will; all being the work of the blessed Spirit, according to that word, "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. i. 6.) The good work is the implantation of spiritual faith, (or spiritual life, for we "live by faith,") and the performing of that good work (or finishing of it, as the margin reads) is the strengthening of that faith onwards, till it is brought to close in with the will of Jehovah as his God, his Father, and his Saviour. And for the want of enlightening and understanding on this point, many poor souls go on fretting all their days, lest God should not perfect that which concerneth them, and should not finish the work of his own hands. But by and by, though it be upon the death bed, they shall see differently; for that faith which hath led them on all their days shall then rise up and take hold of all the blessings of the gospel, fixing on the will of God as being for them in everything they can possibly need.

Now, when a soul is brought by faith to close in with the will of God, I know not of anything that he needs, or anything that he fears. He has Almighty Power against every foe and every opponent; Infinite Wisdom to work out every difficulty and clear him out of every intricacy; and the Infinite Will of God, commanded by his eternal love, to direct his wisdom and his power to work out all things for the good of his child. All nature bows to him; all providences are subject to his control; all foes fly at his presence; all diffi-

culties sink at his wisdom—a God of infinite wisdom and almighty power directing the whole of his attributes by his love for the welfare of his own: O when faith sweetly comes in here, nothing troubles and nothing gives concern. No matter what appearances present themselves, what clouds obscure, what difficulties arise, or what foes attack, it is all nothing, because faith believes God can and will control all, just in the way that shall turn out for his own glory and the soul's good. O I long to live more here! I pant to have more of this sweet experience; and I do desire in my inmost soul that the dear people of God may more and more live in and breathe this blessed atmosphere, to the joy of their heart and the glory of God. O for more of this precious gift, this precious grace!

This sweet experience brings the soul to the place that Paul longed to see his converts in, when he exhorted them to “be careful for nothing.” Careful and unwarrantable anxiety is the fruit of unbelief. But when faith is thus brought into exercise, carefulness goes off, and a sweet peace succeeds. Hence one of old, well schooled in this secret, says, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee.” (Isaiah xxvi. 3.) All the while that a solid, stable staying upon God is maintained in the soul by the Author and Finisher of our faith, it is impossible for foes, troubles, difficulties, darkness, Satan, sin, death, or anything else, to destroy the sweet peace that will keep continually flowing through the heart, and that because of the efficiency of the Object that faith fixes on. But as soon as the blessed Object is lost sight of, these things will gain ground upon the heart, and doubts, fears, anxieties, questionings, surmisings, carefulness, and a whole train of the attendants of unbelief crowd in, take up quarters, and abide, till put to the rout by our great Leader lifting a standard against them. But, as I do not wish to take up the dark side in this sheet, I will go on.

Now, I believe the apostle Paul had this faith in these particulars in lively exercise in his soul when he spoke the words I quoted at the head: “I believe God, that it shall be even as he hath told me.” I believe his faith fixed on God as the true and proper Jehovah. I believe he felt him to be the Sovereign of all the earth, who had brought that storm on, and could carry it off by his sovereign power. I believe he felt him to be almighty, and able to do anything he said. I believe he felt him to have infinite wisdom to work out all his concerns, and I believe he felt a confidence in the will of the Lord to accomplish it all accordingly. And what is more, I believe it was so, because I have felt the same in my own heart in these and other particulars. And as face answereth to face in water, and as the work of the blessed Spirit in all teacheth the same things, I believe that not only Paul, but all the heaven-born family of God find in a measure the same things true even in the present day. I come now to the last thing proposed.

III. *The end of faith*: “Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.” (1 Peter i. 9.) The salvation here spoken of is the eternal salvation of the soul from all evil to eternal glory.

This is what faith aims at, and this end she will surely receive. But it may also include the salvation of the children of God from any trouble and every affliction, as David says, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." And sure enough, out of every difficulty they shall be saved, for the Lord's faithfulness is at stake for their deliverance, and he will save for his name's sake, especially where the child of God is led to honour him with his faith respecting it, for God says, "Those that honour me I will honour;" (1 Sam. ii. 30;) and he will surely be faithful to his own word and promise, and the end of faith shall be surely answered, let whatever may contradict it, for it is his own gift, and he will not give us faith to be deceived or quashed, but will surely honour his own grace. Paul's faith here was not put to the blush, though all things made against it in sense, and so shall it be with us. So I believe, so I write, and so my reader shall one day find, if he be of the seed of Abraham.

"What Christ has said must be fulfill'd;
On this firm rock believers build;
His word shall stand, his truth prevail,
And not a jot or tittle fail."

H—

O.

ON ORIGINAL SIN, IN THAT EXPERIENCE WHICH GOD
TEACHETH; AND OF THE REAL CONDITION OF
ALL MEN IN A STATE OF NATURE.

(Concluded from page 223.)

At times I look around me, and gaze on the world, and the works and ways of the men of it. It is true that man, fallen and ruined as he is, is still capable of great things in invention, art, and design; and in execution too. And of such magnitude, also, are the inventive powers of man in the arts and sciences of civilized life, and so wonderfully effective in the accomplishment of many of them, that we are often captivated, and can but naturally admire the exquisite works of that natural genius he is endowed with, and has so patiently and successfully persevered in. A Christian poet of the last century has very forcibly summed it up in the following lines:

"How noble a creature he seems!
What knowledge, invention, and skill!
How large and extensive his schemes!
How much can he do if he will!

"His zeal to be learned and wise,
Will yield to no limits or bars;
He measures the earth and the skies,
And numbers and marshals the stars."

I hardly know what language he would have made use of, had he lived in the present times. But though thus gifted with natural or acquired abilities in the diversified accomplishments of civilized society, man is nevertheless at enmity to God in his heart, if this be

all he knows. This is called in the word of God "the carnal mind, which is enmity to God, and not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Romans viii. 7.) It is true these gifts and accomplishments are good and profitable to men in social life, and to society at large as now constituted; but to the awakened soul, quickened by the Spirit and power of God to know and feel what sin is, and the holiness of God in his law, all put together, and the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them added, appear to him less than nothing and vanity, till he can find peace of conscience, deliverance from the guilt, and relief from the burning plague and leprosy, of sin. And to those who have felt the Saviour as the Way, the Truth, and the Life unto the Father, and know him no longer as a consuming fire, but a reconciled God and Father, how little, whilst this is enjoyed, are natural men in their best estate envied by him! He knows that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called." On the contrary, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world hath God chosen, and things which are despised, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence." (1 Cor. 26—29.)

But on the depravity of our fallen original we may further notice what the dear Redeemer himself says in such language as the following: "If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children," &c. (Luke xi. 13.) Let us here pause a moment, for we often read the word as though we read it not. We are said to be evil by him who knew what was in man; and yet we know how to give good gifts unto our children naturally, though we be nothing before God but that which is evil. In nature, then, we cannot be worse, nor a whit better by original sin, as to the nature of that holiness which God requires, than Satan himself. The evil of our nature comprehends in the aggregate, not only every individual act of every one, in what is criminal and abhorrent, hateful and terrific, beyond the language and power of finite capacities to express; but the whole centred in each one, and that one capable, without the effectual, yet secret restraint of Almighty God, of actually putting it into practice. Under this awfully humiliating consideration we may truly exclaim with the Psalmist, "Lord, what is man?" One petition in the prayer of our Lord is, "Deliver us from evil;" or, as John Newton says it may be rendered, the Evil One. Thus the Lord calls us by nature evil, and Satan the Evil One. Where, then, is the difference between our nature and his in the essence of it? I do not hesitate for a moment to declare my belief, for I have felt the truth of it, that my very nature, from original sin, that is, the disobedience of Adam and Eve, without a single positive act of my own, is as destitute of one single thought, spiritually good, towards the Lord God of Israel, as a corpse is physically unable to perform a single function of animal life. "We are all as an unclean thing," says the church by Isaiah, "and all our righteousnesses as filthy rags." (Isaiah lxiv. 6.) Rather humiliating language for proud man! But the elect, loved by God with

an everlasting love, are made to feel it; or they, any more than others, could not believe it. Adam was threatened that in the day he ate of the forbidden fruit he should surely die. This literally was fulfilled in his immortal soul as to his purity, holiness, and happiness in his God, in the moment of his disobedience; but, for wise ends in the counsel and purpose of God, not instantaneously, as respected the life of the body. This was prolonged for many years to the Antediluvians beyond the present span of human life.

But in patience bear with me a little longer on what is written on the evil of our nature; it may do us no harm. The Saviour says again, "For from within (out of the heart of men) proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, thefts, murders, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness." (Mark vii. 21, 22.) And in Galatians v. 19—21, the apostle calls the evil of our nature "the works of the flesh, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." And in the first chapter of the epistle of Paul to the church at Rome, we have another awful description of the criminality, and worse than that, of our nature among heathen nations. In a certain sense, "they knew God, yet glorified him not as God, neither were they thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and birds, and beasts, and creeping things. God, therefore, gave them up," &c. Read the dread account as further drawn out in verses 25 to 28. The black catalogue is finished by the apostle in such language as this: "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things; disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." This, then, is our nature, and this is all in nature we have to boast of before God, let men fancy, say, or write what they will. The apostle in this same epistle writes, "There is none righteous, no, not one;" and asks this question, and answers it too; "What, then! are we better than they? No," he says, "in no wise; for we have before proved, both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." And what the Jewish people and Gentile nations have practised in days of old, and in every age of the world, and the abominations now practised in secret and in public, in our own land and other lands, where the Word of God and his gospel is and is not professedly known, all prove the desperate wickedness of our nature. And whatever man may at times conceit or think of himself, the Lord never sees the nature we are now heirs to, from Adam's first transgression, a whit better than the black catalogue I have transcribed from and referred to in his word. Woe to man, when the Lord withholds his preventing and restraining grace and power! Hazael, when

he came to Elisha to inquire if his master the King of Assyria should recover of his disease, little thought at that time he should prove such a dog, as to execute what Elisha predicted of him. But the sequel proved the truth of the prophet's prediction. That the whole earth is not an Aceldema, a field of blood, is of the Lord's mercy. From what I know of my vile original, under the Lord's teachings, the sight has been terrible, and at last grew insupportable: and if Almighty God, in sovereign love, had not revealed his Son in me, my end must have been most fearful. Sometimes my thoughts are carried away to the consummation of all things, under the power of what I have known of the nature and evil of sin, under the quickenings of the Lord the Spirit. And I ask myself, what in reality will be the sight, and the horror of the sight, upon those on whom this sentence is pronounced and finally executed: "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!" Horrors, wrath, and rage, will then possess every spirit. We have set before us in the gospel what the spirit of man is capable of enduring from the agency of devils in the possessed Gadarene. Mysterious truth! but the devils knew the great Redeemer; for when the man possessed saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most High? I beseech thee torment me not." And when asked, "What is thy name?" he answered, "Legion;" because many devils were entered into him. The number is understood to be in Roman computation six thousand—some say more. But the thought of one immortal spirit goaded and maddened by so great a multitude as six thousand is awful in the contemplation of it. What a dreadful thing will sin appear, when the wrath of God is poured out without mixture of mercy into the cup of his indignation, upon guilty angels and men! Here the almighty power of God has cast up a bank against sin, and bounded its desolations with this barrier: "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." (Job xxxviii. 11.) But when hope of mercy is lost for ever, and the justice of an infinitely holy, infinitely powerful God, in infinite wrath, is set against the transgressors, its overwhelming billows and waves will sweep all before it. The wrath of God against sin is compared to "a lake of fire burning with brimstone." So that by the figure here used, the extreme torture the natural body must endure immersed in that flaming mineral is set forth before us to show what damnation will be to the immortal spirit under the wrath of God. It is a state and a place "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark ix. 44.) The prophet asks, "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Isaiah xxxiii. 14.) That there are a people of his wrath the word of God is plain, "against whom he hath indignation for ever." (Malachi i. 4.) Solomon says, "The Lord hath made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil." (Proverbs xvi. 4.) And the great apostle of the Gentiles has these express words: "Vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction." (Romans ix. 22.) But until the Spirit quick-

eneth, these solemn truths make but a comparatively faint impression. Like Lot's kindred in Sodom before its destruction, such truths seem them as idle tales, and they believe them not.

But there are some who, under the consideration of truths so important, will inquire and ask, "Could not the Lord, who is infinite in his wisdom, his omniscience, and his power, have prevented the access of Satan, and thus have prevented the temptation and the transgression to which our first parents were subjected?" Certainly he could; and to deny it is to undeify his glorious nature. But to do it was not good in his sight, or he would have done so, and have preserved man in his created purity. Our inquiry on so profound a deep is more curious than wise. His sovereignty we must bow to or break under. It is written, "He giveth not account of any of his matters, but doeth as seemeth good unto him in the army of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth." (Daniel iv. 35.) But, however lost at times we feel in our reasonings on so solemn a matter as the first introduction of sin in our world, it becomes us, who are but dust and ashes, to bow down with Abraham before the Lord, and exclaim, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis xviii. 25.) We may be surfeited with queries whilst fleshly reasonings are predominant; but those who have felt their nature and their desert as taught by the Lord, and have tasted that the Lord is gracious, know that they themselves in their best estate are altogether vanity—are by nature evil, only evil in his sight, and that continually; but that the Lord is infinite in holiness, infinite in love, and, consequently, infinite in the blessedness of his nature, and therefore infinitely righteous and just in all he does or suffers to be done. "Let no man say," bids the apostle James, "when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man; but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (James i. 13—15.)

I affirm, had it been in the wisdom of God to do so, he could have kept by his power, not only Adam and Eve, but also Satan and the fallen angels, in their original purity, as he did the elect angels, who sinned not; and it becomes us, who are but creatures of a day and allied to the dust, not to attempt to be wise above what is written. "Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth," is our admonition in the word of God; "but woe unto him that striveth with his Maker," and calls his ways unjust. If a poor finite worm cannot comprehend or understand the works and ways of God, though it is written of him, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" yet it is not uncommon to find a something within prone to cavil at the mystery of God's providence in the world, and to question, in what he sees, and feels, and hears, the wisdom and goodness of God in the management of the world and the things of it, in manifold instances under present appearances from day to day. But leaving unprofitable disputations, we know assuredly that the solemn effect or issue of man's disobedience was the curse. Under

this, "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now;" and so must do, let men carp and cavil as they may, until the mystery of God shall be finished, and the works of the devil, in all the redeemed of the Lord, be entirely destroyed; "for it was for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." (1 John iii. 8.)

What a solemn thing is the purpose, and how momentous are the decrees of God! In his infinite mind he saw the end from the beginning in all things—ere the creation was—ere the heavens or the heavenly hosts of angels were created, or the earth, or man, and creatures upon it. The glorious God, in his Trinity of Persons, a mystery, existed and lived from eternity—from everlasting—infinite in the love and blessedness of his nature, and infinite in all the glorious attributes of it: and for ever necessarily must have continued so if neither angels nor men had been made. But for the development of the glories and perfections of his nature, he created all things, and for his pleasure they are and were created: for so declares the word of God.

May the Lord be with us by the power, and light, and love of his Spirit, in our meditations on his word! All things good and bad are in his hands, and he will order them notwithstanding all our sins, weaknesses, and infirmities, for his own glory, and the ultimate glory of his church. And if we be amongst that blessed number, we shall by and by, if we cannot just yet, join heartily and exult in that deep transporting song of praise by the apostle, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!" "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For of him, and through him, and to him are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

DELTA.

Manchester, August, 1850.

EXPERIENCE OF WILLIAM HARLEY.

(Continued from page 296.)

I soon found fresh trouble from the workings of corruption within, which I found to be too hard for me; but on reading the 7th chapter of Romans, when I came to the 20th verse, "Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me," it was immediately suggested to, or my wicked heart concluded within me, "If it is not I that do the evil, God will not impute it to me; and if it is neither done by me nor imputed to me, what need have I to be troubled at it?" And hence I endeavoured to make myself easy again, and to leave off watching and prayer, which I found to be a wearisome task.

But neither could I here find rest; my conscience was too much alarmed to be easily quieted, and my late horror of mind had made too deep an impression to be soon forgotten. Yea, with Job I may say, "I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet;

yet trouble came." (Job iii. 26.) For while I was striving to quiet myself, my soul was alarmed afresh with these words: "Woe be to them that are careless and at ease in Zion." (Amos vi. 1.)

I now began to think myself the most unhappy creature living upon earth; for I could neither find happiness in religion, nor be content to be irreligious.

Some of my acquaintance, who would be thought very good Christians, now began to rally me on account of my uneasiness about religion; telling me that God was not such a hard Master as to require us to be troubled about such little matters; that if I laid things so much to heart, I should surely go beside myself; and that I ought to go more into company. This advice was gladly received by me; and accordingly I went into company, but was far from meeting with that which I wanted amongst them, namely, rest, peace, and quiet of mind. For though my thoughts were diverted from those things which gave me concern whilst I was with them, they returned with greater weight when absent from them; yet did I strive to stifle convictions and to make myself easy, by thinking I should stand as good a chance as my companions; and if at last I should go to hell, I should have company; for though hell is doubtless a place of misery and torment, yet surely it cannot be so dreadful a place as some men represent it.

But these my false reasonings, and more especially my bad conduct in continuing my correspondence with carnal company, were rebuked with these words, which some time after dropped upon my mind: "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" (Luke xxiv. 5.)

And here I cannot but remark on the wisdom as well as the goodness of God, who knows how to suit times and cases: "Surely he hath made all things beautiful in his time;" (Eccles. iii. 11;) for going one night to hear a sermon, God was pleased to direct his servant* to a subject so suited to my case, that I have often thought it could not have been more so had he chosen it on purpose for me, or as though he had no other individual to preach to. His text was, "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partaker of her sins, and that ye be not partaker of her plagues." From these words he attempted to show two things: First, The hurt that carnal company did the children of God; and secondly, The danger they are in who are found in company with the wicked. For though God will never finally destroy any soul for whom Christ died, yet as to the afflictions of this life, even the godly might share in the calamity of the wicked, from being found amongst them. His discourse, as well as subject, was so suited to my case, that almost every sentence seemed to be of use, either for conviction or direction, and to be particularly enforced upon me by that scripture which he quoted: "Wherefore, come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you." (2 Cor. vi. 17.) The word "ye" was pointed to me, and the words "saith the Lord," seemed to enforce the whole upon me, as though they had been spoken imme-

* Mr. Cennick.

diately from God to me; indeed, I have no reason to doubt that God did by his Spirit speak in his word unto my soul. Accordingly I was helped to refrain from going to meet my carnal acquaintance as had been usual; and if at any time by accident I met with any of them, I endeavoured to pass them without stopping, or by making as little acknowledgment as possible. So that, as there was a dislike on my part, there gradually grew an indifference on theirs; and in a little time I could pass them without any recognition of former acquaintanceship, for which I had cause to be thankful, and of which I was very glad.

I was now much freed from outward lets and interruptions, and with greater liberty could walk to the house of God in company with those that keep holy day.

But now again my eyes were turned upon my outward walk and conversation: and because it was such as frequently met with applause, I walked in pride, under a covert of seeming humility. And now, as Mr. Bunyan says in his "Pilgrim's Progress,"

"The Christian man is seldom long at ease;
When one fright's gone, another doth him seize;"

so I had not long enjoyed deliverance from my former troubles, ere I fell into another, namely, on account of the doctrine of election; for notwithstanding I had formerly espoused that doctrine, yea, and openly defended it too, in the catechetical exercise before mentioned, yet never till now did it give me any uneasiness; but now I began to think more seriously about it. That it was a truth I could not doubt, I saw it so manifest, not only as expressed in some, but also implied in many more passages of sacred Scripture; and therefore my present trouble did not arise from any query whether it was a truth or not, but whether I was one of the elect. And here I shall endeavour in a simple manner to relate the workings of my mind and thoughts as I then found them exercised about this matter.

After some time passed in uneasiness, fearing I was not one of the elect, I began to think that I ought not to trouble myself about it; for I thought I was but wanting to pry into God's counsels, and "secret things belong to God, but revealed things to us and to our children." (Deut. xxix. 29.) But then these words of our Lord ran much in my mind: "Rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven." (Luke x. 20.)

Well, thought I, they must know it, if they can rejoice in it; and I do not know it. O how happy were they, but how unhappy am I! O that I did but know that my name was written in heaven! But then I thought they lived in our Lord's day, who knew the secrets of heaven, yea, the most secret decree, and was therefore able to inform them that their names were written in heaven; but since that knowledge was now no longer attainable, I endeavoured to satisfy myself as well as I could.

But this salve did not long suit this sore, for another portion of God's word ripped it off while I was reading one morning: "Know-

ing, brethren beloved, your election of God." (1 Thess. i. 4.) This scripture seemed to leave no doubt that it might be known though I knew it not, for the Thessalonians knew it though they lived not in the days of our Lord, and must therefore have received it through the preaching of the apostles. But then, again, I thought there were now no such preachers as the apostles were, and therefore, though it might be known in their day, who spake by immediate inspiration of the Spirit, it might not be now known. This again served for a small space of time, when reading a little tract upon "Assurance," the author quoted the apostle's words to the Romans: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." (Romans viii. 16.) O! thought I, if this knowledge is given by the inspiration of the Spirit, it may be experienced now as surely as ever it was; and though I had not that witness, yet others had, for God is as able to assure his people by his Spirit as he was by his voice when he tabernacled in the flesh and dwelt among us. And no doubt but he does so to those that are of that number; but the reason why I am not assured thereof is, because I am not of that number. How can I expect to know my name is written where it is not written? Yet I found something within me that forbade my despairing, for as the Thessalonians did, so in time I also might know it; doubtless there was a time when the Thessalonians did not know it. Thus "when my feet had well nigh slipped, God's mercy held me up." (Psalm xciv. 18.) Surely, with David, I may say, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." (Psalm xxvii. 13.)

But still I found, what I now take to be, the enemy working upon this my uncertainty; for it was suggested to me, that if I were one of the elect, I must unavoidably be saved, nor could I fail thereof; whereas, if I were not elected, I must unavoidably be damned; and after having done all that ever I could, I must perish, nor could it be otherwise. Then another thought passed through my mind: Well, if I am to perish, (as good, we usually say, be hanged for a sheep as a lamb,) I may as well go to hell for much sin as little sin; for, if I am to be saved, this will not hinder it, and why, then, should I lie under restraint, and deny myself of pleasure, when it will not be of any real benefit to me? For a debtor, thought I, that is confined for fifty pounds, is as much a debtor as he that is confined for five hundred. What matters it, then, whether for much or for little? If I am to be miserable hereafter, what need of my being miserable here too? And, indeed, I found my wicked and corrupt heart ready to embrace these conclusions; for as Dr. Watts well expresses it,

"Your streams were floating me along,
Down to the gulf of black despair;
And, while I listen'd to your song,
Your strains had e'en convey'd me there."

Yet something within me so opposed this, that I could not yield to that whereunto I was tempted, and to which I found but too willing an inclination. But those words of the apostle came fresh into my mind: "Shall we sin that grace may abound? God forbid." (Rom.

vi. 1. 2.) No, thought I, the path of sin can never be the way to heaven; that must needs be a path of righteousness: "For the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." (Romans i. 18.) The way of sin must be the way to hell, and to walk therein must certainly bring me there: "For the wages of sin is death." (Rom. vi. 23.) The thought of hell was worse than death itself could be, if there were no hell to follow.

And now again was I made to cry unto God, in the bitterness of my soul, "O Lord, deliver me from going down to the pit." "Show me thy mercy, and cause me to know that I am one of thy elect and chosen ones. Lord, let me know that I have redemption in Jesus' blood, the forgiveness of sins;" for which I was encouraged to hope by these words, which dropped upon my mind at that time: "These things ye shall know, if ye follow on to know the Lord." (Hosea vi. 3.) I know the words are, "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord;" but I choose to set them down as I received them, believing the substance of Scripture to be Scripture. I was hereby encouraged to hope it would in time be my mercy; and hence, also, I was encouraged to follow on to know this blessing, I mean, to continue instant in supplication, remembering the word of the Lord: "For all this will I be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them."

Here, also, I must again remark the legality of my spirit, making my continued perseverance in prayer the condition of obtaining; and not viewing it as a spiritual blessing, as a gift of God by grace. I sought it, as it were, by the works of the law. (Rom. ix. 32.)

And here I will relate the difficulty I met with in respect to private prayer; or, in other words, the exercise of my soul in performing private prayer.

I had no place for retirement but my lodging-room, nor that free from the company of a carnal young man, my bedfellow, before whom I wanted courage to kneel down and pray. Though I endeavoured to redeem time from supper, it would seem as though Satan wrought in him mightily to prevent, or at least to interrupt me; for no sooner had I got upon my knees, than I heard him coming, when my spirits were discomposed, and in a flutter I arose off my knees, for fear he should come and catch me. For which my conscience smote me; and that scripture was dreadful in my ears, "Whoso is ashamed of me or of my words, in this sinful and adulterous generation, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father and of the holy angels." (Mark viii. 38.) O dreadful thought, to be disowned by Christ in that day! better I had never been born! And that for fear of a poor creature in no way superior to myself! O, thought I, what a weak, yea, foolish, as well as timorous creature I am!

Well, thought I, God doth not require the voice in prayer. He can as well hear mental as vocal prayer: wherefore, I resolved the next night to continue at prayer, though he should come. I will be without light, and "surely the darkness will cover me." (Psalm cxxxix. 11.)

(To be continued.)

BY IT HE BEING DEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH.

No. VIII.

My dear Friend,—Perhaps at times you may feel anxious to hear from me, though I am not worth a thought from any of the Lord's dear people. If you knew what a creature, or rather, monster, I am, you would not think it strange my writing so seldom; though I assure you it is not for want of spiritual regard and affection.

I was truly glad to receive a few lines from you, and particularly with this expression: "I write to you without reserve." I can say, with the same feelings I write at this time, as it regards anything of a formal nature; but as it respects spiritual things, I fear it is only presuming in me to make the attempt, though I have had the desire again and again to do so.

I was much surprised in receiving a letter from Mr. — so shortly after writing my last, that the Lord should permit and enable him to write so freely to such a worthless and ignorant worm. May the Lord of his great mercy ever keep me from deceiving him or you, or any other manifested child of God.

I humbly trust the Lord, of his infinite love and great condescension, is convincing me more and more of the total defilement and miserable pollution of my wretched nature, so that I can truly and feelingly cry, "Unclean! unclean!" I do feel myself the most filthy of all creatures, and in my own apprehension conclude there cannot be any one labouring under the same evil and devilish workings and imaginations, as I am the wretched subject of; but get away from them I cannot. And why? Because, like deadly poison, it flows through and affects every part.

Emptying work is painful work. To *feel* we are sinners is more than to *confess* we are, is it not? But I feel persuaded you know it well. The Psalmist says, when speaking of his enemies, "They compassed me about like bees." (Psalm cxviii. 12.) A most striking representation of those hosts of internal foes and corruptions which beset, harass, and perplex the soul! And that is not the worst. How often do we feel their most venomous stings left in our consciences! and then nothing short of the precious, guilt-extracting blood of Jesus can ever remove their irritating and painful virus.

But to return. Prayer I sensibly feel to be the gift of God the Holy Spirit. Words I often cannot use, and at times dare not, as I fear it has been nought but form many times with me; but now I often bow the knee, and sigh, and long for an opening, but no liberty, no access, no communion. His word appears hid from me: I read, and that is all. No heart-application, no meditation. This, though not always, is frequently my case. When the Lord in compassion does favour me with a little of his presence, whether in prayer or otherwise, I feel it unspeakably sweet and precious. I esteem this a great mercy, as it strengthens and encourages my heart. And fain would I feel a continuance of it. But, alas! this is not my case at present, and I often think I shall go halting to the

grave. Yet if we knew nothing of revivings and heart-cheering manifestations, we should not see and feel the emptiness of all short of his presence. So it is good to feel our utter helplessness and inability to perform anything without him. Then are we brought in some measure to know experimentally that without him we can do nothing. But our proud yet foolish hearts want a fleshly religion. And where would it lead us?

How different are these things from what we once thought religion consisted in! It is not in outward forms and ceremonies, nor in outward conduct either, though ever so circumspect. David says, "Thou desirest not sacrifice, &c.; but a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Jesus says, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." Are not these words truly acceptable to a sensibly poor, needy, empty, naked, polluted, filthy, guilty, and hell-deserving sinner?

O how inexpressibly sweet, after a season of temptation, weariness, and the cruel harassing of an accusing, tempting devil; and, however long and painful, it is doubly welcome to realize and taste the honey of the Lord's deliverance, though it be from the once ravening jaws of a lion's carcase! "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." So, though painful, we would not be without these exercises, when in our right minds, knowing that without them we cannot enjoy any comfort. Indeed, we should not want it if all things internal and external were calm and smooth. But I do hope the Lord has shown us that trials we must have more or less.

Since I wrote last I have had many trials, (some of which cannot be communicated,) independent of my ill state of health. Indeed sin is the great cause of all our sorrows and troubles; but may we be the highly-favoured subjects of having them sanctified to our poor hearts, in showing us the emptiness, and vanity, and uncertainty of all earthly things, and, under the teaching of the blessed Spirit, put our whole trust and reliance on the Lord, who has preserved, upheld, and kept us to the present moment, amidst many temptations, snares, and besetments, and has not left us to disgrace his dear name and cause outwardly. Through those evils in our hearts, if left one moment, it would soon be done.

I hope you will pardon and look over every imperfection, humbly trusting the Lord will. Be so kind as to give my warmest affection to Mr. —. I hope he will not think amiss of my not answering his very kind letter. Indeed, I almost fear writing to him, though I often view you of one heart and one mind, so that I doubt not he will see this my very imperfect scribble.

I would just inform you that my health is very middling. I have been a trifle better, but these last three days not near so well. I have declined taking medicine. If it is the Lord's will, I hope to see some opening for me, as sometimes I feel rather anxious, and then again careless; I think without an alteration soon, it will never be removed. I have spitting of blood at intervals, but have not had a return since Sunday week. I get a little relief from

pain by the application of mustard poultices, but not for long; but it is a mercy to have a little cessation from pain.

My paper will not admit of any more. I hope it will not prove tedious to you, so must conclude.

I remain, affectionately yours,

Oakham, June 19th, 1837.

THOS. COPELAND.

AN ORIGINAL LETTER BY THE LATE JOHN KENT,
AUTHOR OF THE HYMNS.

Dear respected Friend,—Mercy and peace be multiplied! We have never seen each other in the flesh, and perhaps never shall, till, with the hundred and forty-four thousand of the redeemed, we meet in the general assembly and church of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven.

I am living to praise "Him who hath remembered me in my low estate," in the Adam-fall transgression, a state of alienation, enmity, and death. Seventy and two years I have been the subject of his innumerable mercies; they have been more in number than the hairs of my head, and far, very far outrun my minutes. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

He hath brought me up once more from a bed of sickness and extreme pain; he has spoken to me from the chamber of the tomb, by his word, by his Spirit, and by his providences, to watch and be sober.

I daily feel the pins of the old tabernacle taking out and the house tottering over my head. My sight also is so far gone that for more than two years I have required a guide to walk even at noon. I embrace the present opportunity of my little grandson being with me of scratching a few lines, hoping they will meet you in the full possession of health, that best of earthly favours; living under the blest anticipation that when this life of sin, sorrow, and suffering shall conclude, of entering upon that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that cannot pass away.

I know not how it may be with thee and the Lord's heritage of Lewes respecting things spiritual, but with me it is a day of small things indeed. The gold is become dim, and the salt (as to sensible enjoyment) has lost its savour; but I bless the God of all grace for his word of promise, that meets me *as I am*, with all my wants, wounds, and wretchedness. I bless him for the revelation of Jesus Christ, with all the fulness and freeness of his great salvation, without money and without price. I want to be living more on His fulness in whom it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should well. "Thy kisses (says Rutherford) have been sweet unto me; but I want to live more on thy fulness, and to receive from THEE, O thou chief of ten thousands, and altogether lovely Jesus, grace for grace."

Thy letters I heard read with delight; they contain such a depth of the trial of faith, and the wonderful deliverance that God hath wrought in the fulfilment of his promise, as to refresh my soul.

Tender my most affectionate remembrance to your beloved pastor, with all the salt of the earth at Lewes; wishing them every blessing of the better covenant, which is ordered in all things well. Also to Mr. G. I am indebted; and to him, with the friends at Brighton, it would have given me great pleasure to acknowledge my obligations in person, but this pleasure, in all probability, I shall never have.

The Lord bless you with the sensible tokens of his presence, hear your prayers, and out of his riches by Christ Jesus supply your every need.

I remain, thy brother in Christ,

JOHN KENT.

Devonport, August 3rd, 1839.

A LETTER BY WM. HUNTINGTON.

Grace, mercy, and peace be with thee, through our Lord Jesus Christ! This comes in acknowledgment of your favour to me, hoping that some spirituals have been sown, as you send to me. I hope you still occupy, and I hope you gain by trading, for 'tis heartless working when there is no profit; but this never will be the case with those who set their heart upon the truth, and trade in godliness. The hardest branch of this business is to learn our poverty, and submit to be stripped of our supposed worth and worthiness. The true riches are soon brought in, when the soul becomes poor; and the breaking in of light and life is perceptible enough, for Satan will couch behind the old vail, and shelter himself in our mind's unbelief and hardness of heart as long as he can. They that take them captive hold them fast, and refuse to let them go. But the Redeemer is strong; he pleads our cause, and takes the spoil from the strong; and in nothing does the devil strengthen and support his hold of us and his interest in us more than by labouring to sink us in despair or despondency; this is his master-piece, and our strongest bar. But plain simple truth weakens it, makes inroads upon it, and gains ground upon the *will*, the *mind*, and the *affections*. And as it grows upon these, so it prevails against darkness, enmity, and despondency. I should like to know how you got on. I am not in circumstances to make any other return than a share in my poor petitions, when the promised help is afforded me.

Yours most affectionately,

Cricklewood, April 24th, 1806.

W. H. S. S.

The revelation made of Christ in the blessed gospel is far more glorious, more excellent, and more filled with rays of divine wisdom and goodness, than the whole creation, and the just comprehension of it attainable, can contain or afford. Without the knowledge hereof, the mind of man, however priding itself in other inventions and discoveries, is wrapped up in darkness and confusion. (John xvii. 3).—*Owen.*

SORROW AND COMFORT; OR, CONFLICTS AND TRIUMPHS THE COMMON LOT OF ALL REAL BELIEVERS.

BY JOHN RUSK.

"The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy."—Prov. xiv. 10.

(Continued from page 317.)

I have treated of some of the causes of real joy, as 1, Of the blessed Spirit testifying of Christ to us and manifesting pardon; 2, Of our justification by faith in Christ's righteousness; 3, Of election; 4, Of salvation; 5, Of Christ visiting our souls; 6, Of telling others what the Lord has done for us; 7, Of feeding on God's word of promise; 8, Of a good conscience; 9, Of the pure gospel of Christ; 10, Of every time we are enabled to believe God's work in our hearts; 11, Of the abundant provision made for us; and 12, Of the security or solid foundation for all these things. Does not all this joy far exceed and amply make up for all the battles, let them be as numerous as they may? Yes, so much so that they are hardly worth naming. Paul will settle it at once: "For our light affliction, (and I am sure he had his share,) which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Observe the difference then. All the bitterness is "light affliction," but the joys are an "eternal weight of glory." All the bitterness is compared to a moment; but the joys are eternal or everlasting. All bitterness is only temporal, and death will end it; but the joys shall never end, being eternal. (2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.)

"The heart knoweth his own bitterness, and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy."

II. We will now show *what a false joy is*, for that is very needful, that we may see how opposite it is to the true joy.

1. Then, a false joy has "*no deepness of earth.*" This is the reason why such immediately springs up. The subjects of it hear the same truths of the gospel as the true children of God, with the outward ear; and this not having *much* earth shows they have *some*. These I believe to be natural convictions, such as the young man had who came to Christ, and Felix, who trembled when Paul reasoned with him. Yet, after all, the fallow ground of his heart is not ploughed up; no, nor are his convictions followed with salvation. The heart is still hard and impenitent, so that the seed does not enter. Take it from Christ's own mouth, whose is the lip of truth: "Behold a sower went forth to sow; (every true preacher is a sower;) and when he sowed, some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth, and forthwith they sprang up, because they had no deepness of earth; and when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away." Now, he explains it as follows: "But he that receiveth the seed into stony places, is he that heareth the

word and anon with joy receiveth it, (here is a false joy,) yet hath he not root in himself." No, he has not taken root downward. He does not believe that he is such a sinner as God's word says he is. This rooting in self appears to me to be a knowledge of self and of the fall, so as to be rooted and grounded in it, which this man is not. "But endureth for a while," that is, until some keen trials come; "for when tribulation and persecution come because of the word, by and by he is offended." (Matthew xiii. 11, 12.) Learn from this never to set light of convictions for sin and a rooted knowledge of self. This man received the seed, that is, he heard it, and understood the plan of salvation, but it was all on the surface.

2. Another branch of false joy appears to be, *being pleased with the novelty of the doctrine of Christ*. This joy is not because they have an experience of the truth, but because others have, and that is enough for them, and they will run about continually after "Lo here," and "Lo there." But they hate coming to the light; and they in the heart hate the real power of godliness. "They are zealously affected." It is a dangerous path. Such were those, as we read, who rejoiced in John's light for a season, and afterwards said he had a devil. O how many deceptions there are!

3. This false joy will *go on with living in sin*, which real joy cannot. Hence you read that "the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment." This does not mean that it may not last for a long time, for a moment sometimes signifies all our life; but it is only a moment compared with eternity. Hence Paul says our affections are but for a moment. It therefore means that he will only have his false joy in this world. And if you read on in the chapter, you will find that his bones were full of the sin of his youth. That is, he delighted in uncleanness; wickedness was sweet in his mouth; he loved to talk of it; he spared it, and did not forsake it; and God says he shall not see the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter, so that he will have no joy after death. (Job xx.) Read it through. It is a very searching chapter.

4. Another branch of this false joy arises from *vainly supposing that texts of Scripture coming to the mind come from God*. The devil sometimes sends them. And such were the foolish virgins; they took the lamp, but no oil. What lamp do you suppose they took? Say you, Why, the moral law. I do not believe it. Why so? Because they were attached to the gospel, and for that they are called virgins. Yes, and they liked to hear the truth, and stood by it to the last. Then, say you, you do not believe that the law was the lamp which they took? No. I believe it was the promises of God's word, without a scriptural warrant. Hence David says, "Thy word is a light unto my feet, and a lamp unto my path." I have met with such characters. This or that promise comes to them. Satan can send promises to hypocrites, and does, as you

may see in Rabshakeh. He says to Hezekiah, "Am I come up without the word of the Lord?" No. "The Lord said unto me, Go up against Hezekiah." And thus the devil deceived him, and so he does thousands. But say you, Does not God send promises to his people? Certainly he does; but they always come in a time of real need. He speaks a word in season to such as are weary. But these characters are not weary. Their joy is light and vain; and the reason is, they take no oil. They have not the Holy Spirit in their hearts, the unction, the anointing. At last they found out their mistake, and said to the wise, "Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out." Thus "the light of the righteous rejoiceth, when the lamp of the wicked shall be put out."

5. Another branch of false joy arises from *self-confidence*. The man trusteth in himself that he is righteous; and he is satisfied to go on in dead works, and prosper in that way. Providence favours him, and he does many outward things which are very serviceable to the children of men. Would God there were more of it! But the danger lies in *trusting* to those things, and our supposing that *on that account* we are high in God's favour. Now observe: "And the hypocrite's hope shall perish, whose hope shall be cut off, and whose root shall be a spider's web. He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand;" (that is, the house which Christ speaks of that the man built who heard his sayings, but did them not; and it is building on self, or on the sand;) "he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure." And now we are told what this house was: "He is green before the sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden; his roots are wrapped about the heap and seeth the place of stones. Behold this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others grow." (Job viii. 19.) All this arises from being rooted in the flesh, and yet laying claim to the things of God; and for this he is called a hypocrite.

6. Once more. A false joy is found in *those that have by-ends* in what they are about, which cannot easily be found out by others. And therefore a man may attend the pure gospel, but not from pure motives. He may have an eye upon a wife with money, and she may be a godly woman; it is, therefore, needful that he should talk about spiritual things as well as he can. The same to get trade. The same, if poor, to get assistance. And such may find joy arise, hoping they shall get on in this way; when, at the same time, the heart is far from God. Hence the apostle James says, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy to heaviness." (James iv. 8, 9.) All these six things are a summary of the false professor's joy, which is quite opposite to real joy.

III. I will now come to the third thing proposed, and that is, *What is intended here by a stranger; and that this stranger does not*

intermeddle with this real joy. "The heart knoweth his own bitterness, and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy."

This stranger, then, is a stranger to the true God. He does not know God. And let a natural man have every advantage that he may; let him have all learning, gifts, and abilities; let him read God's word so as to retain it in his memory, and understand both the gospel and the law in the letter; and let him constantly study these things, so as to be able to preach and pray in public, and be greatly admired; all this and much more may be, and yet the man be a stranger to the true God.

1. Such are strangers to *God's law*, as Paul was before his conversion. He really thought that only an outward obedience was required, and therefore he vainly imagined that he was blameless. But God's law is spiritual, and we are "carnal, sold under sin." And so the apostle found it, for "when the commandment came, sin revived, and he died." But before this he was "alive without the law," and sin was dead. "I have written unto Ephraim the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing."

2. Again: Such do not know God in *the gospel*. What is the gospel? Why, the power of God unto salvation, the righteousness of God revealed, and the ministration of the Spirit. But these strangers know nothing of all this, because it is not head knowledge that will do. A man's knowing that God displays his power in saving sinners is one thing; but for him to know that God has saved *him*, is another. This takes in a knowledge of our lost estate, because it is those that feel they are lost whom Christ came to seek and to save. Again: for a man to read, and with natural understanding to give his assent and consent that the righteousness of God is revealed in this gospel, is one thing; and this a man may agree to and preach to others; but for him to feel himself first of all condemned for the want of righteousness, which is a law work, and then to feel this righteousness of Christ, which is the power of God, displayed in him, to justify him freely from all things, is quite another thing. Again: for a man to agree to it that without the Spirit of God we can do nothing, (as thousands do,) is one thing; but for a man to have God's Spirit in his heart like a springing well is another. You clearly see, then, that a stranger neither knows God in the law nor in the gospel. Hence Paul tells us exactly what a stranger is. This is what we all are by nature. Take notice of what he says when writing to the Ephesians. He is addressing himself to the Gentiles, and says, "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." (Ephes. ii. 12.) Now, this verse gives a full description of the stranger in our text. It is what we all are by nature, both elect and reprobate. Nor does any superficial knowledge alter this. All light, knowledge, and understanding of the letter of truth there

may be. Yea, a man may have the Holy Spirit, so as to talk and to preach truth, and to be looked up to. Yet, if this Spirit never enters the heart, such a one is a stranger to God, to his family, to the law, to the gospel, and to his own heart. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." These are searching, yet substantial truths, and never can be overthrown. Read Hebrews vi., and you will see it clearly enough, if God enlighten you.

First, then, as it respects the verse quoted, the apostle tells them they were "without Christ." Consequently, the devil was not cast out of them at that time. He reigned and ruled, and they were in unbelief; for Christ dwells in the heart by faith. This is a stranger.

Secondly, "Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel." You see here that a stranger has not a new nature. He is not a new creature. He is as different from a child of God as a dog is from a lamb or a sheep; alienated from the life of God. There is not such a thing in a stranger as the smallest real desire after the true God. The language of a stranger, let him pretend to whatever he may, is "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways."

Thirdly, He is "a stranger to the covenants of promise." By covenants in the plural I understand both the old and the new; and such a man, as I have shown, knows neither law nor gospel in the power of them; for so we must understand it. He may know a good deal of the letter. He may have natural convictions, which will make him uneasy; and a natural faith, to believe what the letter of truth says, so as to understand all mysteries. But he is a stranger to the law in its killing power. The sentence has never come home, to stop his mouth and bring him in guilty before God, under the quickening influence of the Holy Ghost. Nor do such at all know what that blessed liberty is which the free-born son is the subject of.

Fourthly, A stranger has "no hope." That is, no good hope. He is destitute of grace; for a good hope is through grace. He is a stranger to salvation. Hence you read of the hope of salvation. He is a stranger to spiritual life. You read of a "lively hope."

Fifthly, He is "without God in the world." Not as a God of providence, for he daily supplies him; but he has not the true God as all the elect have—the Father. "He that loveth dwelleth in God, and God dwelleth in him." But the stranger has no love, only natural or corrupt affections. Again: God the Father teaches his children out of his law: "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." And hard, yea, very hard lessons they are to learn. But the stranger is destitute of this teaching; and, indeed, in general they do not pretend to it, but say they were drawn by love. So they may have been, in their way. But as many as God loves he rebukes and chastens; which chastening, as I said, is out of God's law. This, when done by God the Father, draws us to his Son; and there we

get rest from all legal labour: "No man can come to me," says Christ Jesus, "except the Father which hath sent me draw him. Every man, therefore, that hath heard or learned of the Father, (out of the law, his lost estate and the law's spirituality,) cometh unto me." All this is election: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee" to my beloved Son. Therefore Christ says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour (at the law, under the teaching of my Father) and are heavy laden, (with the burden of all your sin, guilt, and fruitless labour,) and I will give you rest." I will freely give you rest from sin, guilt, conscience, and the law, and from all condemnation. Such are not without God the Father, nor without God the Son. They know God in his terrible majesty, and they tremble; and they know God the Son by the sweet rest which they feel in their souls; and they also know the blessed Spirit, because he testifies of Christ, witnesses their adoption, and enables them to cry, Abba, Father.

3. But again: A stranger is one that is "uncircumcised in heart." (Ezek. xlv. 91.) But then it may be asked, What is a circumcised heart? I answer, We are all by nature lovers of every thing but the true God. We love idols, and they are innumerable. Our hearts are full of them. Self is an idol: "Lovers of their own selves." Money is an idol: "The love of money is the root of all evil." The pleasures of this world, so called by us, are idols: "Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." This vain world, with all its fooleries, is an idol: "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Relatives and worldly property are idols: "He that loveth father, mother, wife, children, houses, land, &c., yea, his own life, more than me, is not worthy of me." And a man's own honour is a great idol. These are a few of the many idols that are in our hearts. Look at King Saul, how he thirsted after honour to the very last; and his nature, in the Adam-fall transgression, was no worse than ours. We are all alike by nature.

Now, circumcision was a painful operation to go through in the flesh, and so it is in the Spirit; for it is cutting down all these idols which are rooted in us; and when they are cut away, then to shed abroad God's love in our hearts. This certainly is circumcision. Would you see a circumcised person? Asaph was the man. You see what a conflict he had; yet after all he could appeal to the Lord: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." And Peter: "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee."

But these idols will come in again and again, in one way or another, in the brightest saint; and this calls for so much furnace work as they are called to go through. But this stranger knows nothing experimentally of these sore exercises, for these idols reign and rule in him unmolested and unresisted, and he is satisfied with the letter of truth, and is pleased with gospel notions.

(To be concluded in our next.)

O B I T U A R Y .

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS RESPECTING E. C., WHO
DIED JANUARY 15TH, 1845.

December 17th, 1844.—I deferred writing a few days, in the hope of having a little news of rather a more cheering nature for you, respecting my dear brother; but I have waited in vain, for he appears to be sinking gradually, and his disease to be gaining strength every day. Finding such to be the case, and perceiving Mr. — still to be completely baffled, we thought it would be no satisfactory to have further advice; and Thomas expressing a wish to that effect, we sent for Dr. —, who came to-day, and he, I am sorry to say, confirms all our fears respecting him. The doctor said he could hold out no hopes whatever of his recovery. His lungs, he said, are seriously affected, and he did not think he would continue many weeks. My dear mother, who was much distressed about my brother's hopeless case, told him in as tender a manner as she could the doctor's opinion. He received the intelligence with perfect composure, said he expected it, and that his feelings told him his end was near as certainly as the doctor's opinion. He expressed much gratitude for your kind note, and wished he had some of that sweet experience you describe, to look back to. I said to him, I was afraid, in the expectation of some great thing, he might overlook some small tokens for good, some meltings of heart and desires after the Lord Jesus; but he would not admit he had felt anything of the kind, and then lamented his insensibility and the hardness of his heart, which, he said, seemed to feel nothing, not a good desire; no, nor did his dangerous state with regard to his health, nor yet the danger of his soul, in the least affect or terrify him. I am pleased to observe, however, these last two or three days he seems rather stirred up to seek the Lord, and his mind appears to be much engaged on better things. He says he has no desire to enter the world again, and would much rather die than live, did he feel himself secure in Jesus.

December 22nd, 1844.—I write a line to thank you all. Poor Thomas was deeply affected, and particularly with my uncle's kind intention to visit him. Mr. — has just called; he says Tom is in that state that he may be taken away any minute. I read the very valuable extract you so kindly sent, and he read it himself. Ah! said he, it is indeed sweet and encouraging to the truly humble and broken in heart; but my heart is so hard. He seemed to think he had no part or lot in the matter. It is truly distressing to hear his bitter complaints and to see his distress. My heart bled for him yesterday morning. Mr. H. called. Thomas perceived Mr. H. thought him worse. Oh, he said, when we were alone, to be so near my end, and yet to have no feeling! I shall be lost, lost, lost! and then he sobbed aloud. I knew not what to say or do, but repeated to him the Saviour's declaration, that he came to seek and save that which was lost; and I told him to plead it in prayer to God, who would not suffer one jot or tittle of his word to fail; but would surely, if he felt himself in that condition, visit him with his salvation.

December 27th, 1844.—He often adverts to my uncle's* conversation and prayer; and on the day following your visit, was more cheerful than I have known him for some time, talking of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, and blessing God that he was a member of a family to whom he seemed to have peculiar favour, and praying that that favour might be extended to him the unworthiest. I said to him, "I am glad to hear your strain is rather altered; you appear to use the language of hope to-day." He replied, "I don't know how it is, but I am led to look more on the bright side than usual." I asked him what he meant by the bright side. He said he did not dwell so much on himself; but looked more to the Lord Jesus, believing that his unbelief was dishonouring to God, and desiring to trust him with his whole heart. He thought it must be through God's blessing upon what my uncle said, for his views seemed quite changed. But to-day his trouble has returned; he has been lamenting his want of experience, and crying out, "Oh! if the Lord would but give me one word of encouragement, one look of compassion, how I should rejoice!" I said to him, "The word is full of encouragement to the seeker." "Ah! but," he replied, "there is nothing applied, there is nothing comes with power, and 'the kingdom of God stands not in word, but in power:'" and shortly afterwards I heard him praying earnestly that the Lord would favour him in this way, and give him some passage of Scripture that would show him his state. This afternoon he told me such a feeling of despair came over him as he could not describe; he thought there was no mercy for him; it was too late: the door was shut. However, he afterwards read part of Luke xi., and the 11th verse seemed to stay his mind, and he reasoned with himself upon it: "Will the Lord," said he, "be less merciful and kind than an earthly father? No; if I ask bread, he will not give me a stone; nor for a fish will he give me a serpent." I do trust the Lord will in his own good time answer him to the joy of his heart. No doubt it is for some wise purpose that the blessing is so long delayed. And as he told me a short time ago, that he used to think it an easy matter to repent and to believe; but now he finds that of himself he can do nothing, it may be the Lord is showing him that these graces are not so easy of attainment as he imagined, and that, as they are his gifts, he can bestow or withhold them as he thinks good.

December 29th, 1844.—My dear brother has been expressing his gratitude to the Lord, who has laid him upon the hearts of his people, in very lively terms. He has had a sad day again, and all the encouraging passages of Scripture I could muster would not silence unbelief, or afford him the least comfort; he put everything away, saying, his desires he found were the desires of the slothful, and that he did not search for God with all his heart, or he would have been found of him before this; he was lost, he said, utterly lost, and, "Surely, if I were not the most hardened wretch upon earth, I should bemoan my fate from morning to night; but here I lie, and seem to have no feeling one way or the other;" I suppose he meant either of

* Mr. Chamberlain, of Leicester, we believe.

hope or fear. But when I read your letter to him, and he found my uncle remembered him, and that a passage of Scripture was given with reference to him; when he found that Mr. — and other friends were led to pray for him, he burst into tears, and cried, "Surely, surely. God has some good things for me, or his people would not be stirred up in my behalf." I was not able to sit with him until the afternoon of to-day, but was pleased to observe, whenever I went to look at him, that he was engaged in reading and prayer. When at length I sat down, he after a time closed the book, and said to me, "I have been much favoured to-day; yesterday I could scarcely read at all, but to-day I have been enabled to read a great deal; but alas! alas! I can get nothing, I find no comfort in anything. However, I will endeavour patiently to wait the Lord's time, and see if he is pleased to save me. I often think, when he is pleased to reveal himself to me I shall not be able to contain myself." He had a letter from his brother this morning, which concludes with a hope that he may find the quickening and comforting presence of the Lord with him, and then all his wants would be supplied, and Naphtali-like he would say, "Satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord." He said that passage rather struck him, for when a mere child it used to be on his mind; not that he felt anything from it, but it was the only scripture he knew at that time, and he often repeated it to himself. My dear brother then told me a few words in the portion my uncle read from Luke xiv., which seemed to abide with him; he heard them with feeling at the time, and could hardly repress his tears at the thought, "And yet there is room," for those were the words that struck him. He said he had often before been affected in reading them and thinking upon them, and they have been much upon his mind ever since. As we were talking after tea, he said, "I have been praying this afternoon, and I prayed in a manner different from what I ever did before." I asked him what was the difference. He said, "I will tell you: I thought I would tell the Lord Jesus all I wished to be rid of; and as I was beginning to enumerate the things from which I wished to be delivered, a man appeared, and at the same time I saw, as it were, an immense heap of leaves which bore against my leg and extended a great way from it. And as I went on praying to be rid of this and that, the man drew a leaf out, but with difficulty, lest the leaf should tear, and so part be left behind; and as he separated them he laid each on a table of a very large size." He said he felt sensible all his sins were comparable to the heap of leaves; he should never be able to mention half of them; he therefore begged the Lord to take them all away, not only those that he mentioned, but every one. At last, he said, the leaves were all laid upon the table, each leaf appearing much larger when laid on the table than when first separated from the heap. When the man had put his shoulder under it and borne it away out of his sight, he appeared again; and he then began to lay his wants before the Lord, and to ask him for whatever he felt to need. The first thing he asked for was a conviction of sin, that he might see his lost estate and perishing condition, and the man stood by; the next thing for which he petitioned was

faith, when the man disappeared, and then it came into his mind that he was going too far. Faith was not the next blessing, and therefore he prayed that the Holy Spirit might be given him to convince him of his need of the Saviour's righteousness, and then the man came back and did not seem displeased. He then asked for faith to enable him to apprehend the righteousness of the Lord Jesus; and as the man this time remained, he concluded he did not ask amiss. Just then my mother came in, and beginning to talk, it closed his encouraging vision, for I know not what else to call it. At the conclusion of his relation he said, "But it is all nothing, you know; I cannot take comfort from anything of this sort, and I have been much exercised about telling it. I had concluded not to do so, when something seemed to say, Tell it all."

New Year's Morning, 1845.—My brother is very low to-day, both in body and mind. Hope seems to be almost extinguished. He is all but despairing; and as his end draws nearer, the long, long delay is more and more trying. But if he be kept from sinking into insensibility, we may still hope that the Lord in his own good time will bless him indeed. Yesterday morning he slept till a late hour. When he awoke I went and sat down by him. He fixed his eyes upon me for a short time and said, "Mary, I cannot pray," and it was spoken in so careless and unconcerned a manner that it quite distressed me. But I said, "You must not give up praying; the promise is to those who ask; and God says, 'Ye shall find me when ye search for me with all your heart.'" "Ah!" said he, "there it is, every thing condemns me; 'With all your heart,' and for the want of that, though I have prayed, I may never have prayed at all; and the promises, I have no faith, I cannot lay hold of them." I thought he deserved a rebuke, so I said to him very gravely, "If you really are seeking the Lord, if you really desire to love the Lord Jesus above all things, and are willing to give up every thing for him, the promises are made to you, and you may rest upon them till He himself comes." Tears filled his eyes while he said how he wished to trust in the Lord with all his heart, and that he felt his unbelief to be most dishonouring to God, and knew it deprived himself of much comfort. He prayed earnestly for its removal, and seeming to rouse himself, he would still keep praying. From that time he appeared to use diligence, to press forward with full purpose of heart.

January 4th, 1845.—My dear brother still continues, though every day he expects may be his last. I read Mr. G.'s letter, and it seemed so sweet to me as I went on, that I hoped my dear brother might find something in it; but he remarked, in a very desponding tone when I had finished, that he would read it for himself on the morrow, when he hoped it would please God to bless it to him. He read it, but it appeared like singing songs to a heavy heart; and it almost seems as if every thing he reads and hears aggravates his misery. I think he has been more desponding than ever these last two or three days. "Oh!" he says, "if I could but perceive my heart in the least broken or contrite; could I perceive it in the least going out in desires after the Lord Jesus, then I should be enabled

to lay hold on the promises, feeling myself to be one of those to whom they are made." But there are many things from which I think he might take encouragement. He told me last night that for two days he felt quite desperate; he seemed to himself to be a round ball, and he did not care which way he was tossed. He thought it must come from Satan, it must be a temptation of his. I asked him if he prayed against it. "Pray against it! I believe I did." "And did you get rid of it?" I inquired. "I did." "Then, Tom, are you not ashamed to say your prayers are not answered? Ought you not to take courage, seeing the Lord has heard you in this matter, and to hope you shall not be disregarded in greater things?" He seemed much touched at the thought of having overlooked the Lord's goodness and prayed to be enabled to watch as well as to wait. He said to me, "Yesterday morning I think I had a little hope, but whether it will continue with me throughout the day is a question." I said, "Satan will not cease to harass you on this side of Jordan." "Jordan!" he replied, "your mentioning Jordan brings to my mind what I was thinking upon last night, the ark remaining in the river till all the Israelites had passed over." The hymn beginning, "O that I knew I had life," he says, is about the only thing he ever read that clearly expressed his state and feelings. He often repeats part of it; the line "Not knowing whether Christ will save" is often upon his lips. I am sorry to say he is scarcely able to read at all now. He frequently looks back to the time of his convalescence, and once, upon my saying I wondered what could be the cause of his appearing so much better, he said "he believed God raised him up for a short time to try him. And what was he upon proof? As careless, as worldly-minded, and as eager in the pursuit of amusement as ever." He used, he says, to try himself at that time, and was often alarmed at the delay he perceived in his anxiety after better things. And then he would read and be rather more diligent for a time, but soon relapsed again; and as Jeremiah says, "Hast thou not procured all these things to thyself?"

January 10th, 1845.—To-day dear brother has appeared much more lively towards God than I have seen him for some time. He has expressed greater desire after Christ; and two lines from a sweet hymn in the appendix seem, from the frequency with which he repeats them, to suit his feelings:

"Did Jesus once upon me shine?
Then Jesus is for ever mine."

"Oh!" he suddenly exclaimed, "the wonderful love of the Lord Jesus, that he should leave his glorious abode, and so humble himself for fallen man! Why should he do so? there was nothing desirable in us; it was entirely of his own free will and mercy." He said to me soon afterwards, "I do believe the Lord Jesus will have mercy upon me. I do hope I am one of those he came to save. He says he came to save the lost, and most surely I feel myself to be in that condition. I feel that I am a poor sinful, ignorant, helpless creature, and that I deserve everlasting punishment." On Saturday my brother continued drowsy nearly the whole of the day, but several

times on awaking he engaged fervently in prayer; he also read a little in the afternoon. He frequently expressed an ardent wish for a manifestation of the love of Christ to his soul, and petitioned the Lord Jesus to bless and take him. On Sunday his weakness increased, and sleep overcame him, but he generally awoke with some passage of Scripture on his lips, or some breathing after the Lord. He expressed a great desire to be gone, and seemed to dwell with delight on the happiness that awaited him. He once exclaimed "Lord Jesus, make haste, make haste, dissolve this house of clay!" but presently added, "The Lord's time is best," and desired he might be enabled patiently to wait for it. I said to him in the evening, "I am going to write to your brother John; may I tell him you have a good hope?" "You may indeed," he replied, "and tell him too there is nothing I so much desire as to depart and be with Christ." I felt much pleasure in hearing him thus speak, and should have been glad to know how this change was brought about, but weakness prevented him answering, and I hoped on the morrow he would be enabled to relate the particulars, nor was I altogether disappointed. On Monday morning he appeared much worse, and seeing my mother grieving about it, he bade her not fret, for it would be a glorious change for him whenever it took place. Soon after I heard him in prayer, or rather praise, for he seemed lost in admiration and wonder that the Lord should look upon such a wretch as himself, and even choose him before the foundation of the earth was laid, to be a vessel to honour. Then he reviewed his past life, expressing astonishment that God had borne with one so rebellious, who had from infancy been sinning against him and going from bad to worse. He did not seem much inclined to converse, but remarked to me in the morning, "I cannot think as I wish by any means." I said, "Your bodily weakness is such it is not to be wondered at, but what a mercy it is you found the Lord Jesus before this excessive drowsiness overtook you!" "Or rather," he said, "that I was found of him;" and then he cried, "O that the Lord would shine into my heart, that he would manifest himself to me!" "I trust he has done so in the past." "Yes," he replied, "he has, and he will not leave his work unfinished; but I do not feel that confidence I did yesterday. Doubts begin to arise; surely it is not a delusion." And he appeared much troubled at the idea. He then began to tell me that for the last two days he had been engaged in taking a retrospective view of his life, and he found even from the earliest period he could recollect that he had been a great sinner; from four or five years old, when he went to Old Lucy's school, he could remember how greatly he had sinned, yea, much of his wickedness that he had entirely forgotten was brought to his mind, insomuch that he could see nothing but sin from the beginning to the end. He said no more at that time, but at night he again referred to past times, expressing much sorrow for his sins; but in a kind of rapture added, "The Lord Jesus has borne them all away, so that I have nothing to answer for." I said, "What a mercy it is to have such a confidence!" He replied, "It is indeed. Lord Jesus, dissolve this earthly tabernacle, for I long to be

with thee." This morning he looked at me rather sorrowfully, and said he felt very unsettled, and added, "I dont know how this conflict will end." I said, "Christ Jesus has obtained the victory, and you will be more than conqueror through him; you have hitherto found him a merciful Lord, and he will not fail you in the hour of need." "I know he will not," he replied, "and the hour will soon arrive, if my dream be fulfilled." He told me yesterday he dreamed the preceding night that three or four flies stopped at the door, and the people in them brought a message to him from their master: it was, that the Lord would require him to be with him in a few days. At his request I gave him the book of Psalms; he opened upon the 34th Psalm, and O how he read it, as if it were meat and drink to him! When he came to the 4th verse, where David says the Lord delivered him from all his fears, he paused and said to himself, "No, not quite all, I still have fears." He said to me soon afterwards, "It is surprising how little temptation I have to cope with, but I am led to pray earnestly against Satan, and I trust the Lord hears me." He then, though with great difficulty, on account of shortness of breath, told me another dream he had last night. He thought he was sitting in hell with his elbows on his knees and his head between his hands, but he was rather on an elevated place and was chained to a rock. He thought many went by him on their way to the interior of the place, and as they passed him they attempted to push him down; but instead of that, he resisted and threw them into the abyss; he thought also others came from hell, he, however, overcame them also. Soon afterwards he was seized with a difficulty in breathing, and I believe he thought he was going; indeed, it appeared so to me. He said, as well as his want of breath would allow, "Lord Jesus, come quickly; O make haste; have mercy upon me, O Lord!" but he presently revived. Yesterday he was much exhausted with continued coughing. At night he prayed earnestly to the Lord for some respite, and that he might get a little sleep. His request was graciously granted; he had three or four hours of almost uninterrupted repose; and on awaking about five o'clock this morning, acknowledged the goodness of the Lord, saying he did not know when he had slept more pleasantly. Shortly afterwards he again went to sleep. I was sitting near him when he awoke, about eight o'clock, and heard him thus address the gracious Lord: "O Lord, I did not yesterday pray unto thee, nor think of thee as I ought; I beseech thee to pardon me, and enable me to use more diligence. Give me faith and every grace, and deliver me from my enemies, O Lord." At breakfast he found himself unable to swallow; and his mouth becoming dry and parched, produced an uncomfortable sensation of choking; but he forgot not to apply to the Lord in his extremity, and earnestly besought him to enable him to take sufficient liquid to moisten his mouth. Again the merciful Lord heard his prayer; the difficulty in swallowing was gradually removed, nor did it return during the remainder of his life. About eleven o'clock his medical attendant called. My dear brother wished to know how long he might live. He was told, as he had no pain, he might continue two days. He

looked much disappointed, said he thought his time was much nearer; he hoped the Lord would take him that day. After this, though he had been extremely cheerful the whole morning, his countenance assumed the happiest expression; and his eyes, always animated, became most brilliant and sparkling. He longed to be gone, entreated the Lord to take him that half-hour, nay, directly. "Oh! Lord Jesus," he cried, "hasten! hasten! hasten!" and then, as it were, flashing his eyes round the top of the bed, and smiling, exclaimed, "Oh that I could see Him coming! Which way shall I look? Lord Jesus, dissolve this clayey tabernacle!" He talked so loudly and so quickly, that we were afraid he would exhaust himself; but upon my mother expressing her fears, he said, "Oh! I must talk, I cannot help it, I shall not long be with you; besides, it is such a happy, such a joyful thing to be 'chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began,' and when the Lord comes none can help speaking. Look at Mr. Huntington when the Lord Jesus came to him. Why, he could not attend to his business; no wonder he was obliged to go into the fields to enjoy what he felt." He soon afterwards began to talk of the happiness that awaited him, and the company he should join. He should see, he said, Moses, Enoch, and Elijah, but above all, Jesus; and O what grace, what mercy, that so poor, so vile, so worthless a wretch as himself should be admitted into this glorious company! Talking of his former unbelief, he said he used to consider it as a strong and high wall, which interposed between him and what he longed to enjoy. At first he prayed it might be taken down so far as to allow him to see over it; then he thought he should experience a little encouragement. Then he requested it might be still lowered; then down to his knees; and then removed altogether. "And the good Lord," I said, "has graciously granted you all you asked, and so entirely subdued it." "He has indeed," he replied, "I used to call it a wall because I was at a loss how to express myself." "You see," I remarked, "the Lord understood you; how condescending he is to our weakness!" Many times afterwards he seemed unable to find language to express his joyful feelings, but he would say, "The Lord understands me." In the afternoon my mother asked him if the room-door should be opened. "Never mind the door, mother," he cried, "the door of heaven is open to me, the gate of peace, and joyfully shall I enter therein." Towards evening he became more importunate for the Lord to take him. He cried earnestly and incessantly for the Lord Jesus to come quickly; not from a wish to be released from bodily suffering, for he had none, but from an intense desire to be with Christ. Once he paused in his earnest cries, and expressing a fear that he was impatient, turned towards me, and asked what he should do. I replied, "It is written, we should quietly hope and patiently wait." Poor boy, he burst into tears, saying, "But this is not quietly hoping and patiently waiting. Lord Jesus, pardon me in this thing; give me patience, and enable me to wait thy time, which is best." After talking some time with me respecting his interment, and a few other things, which he did with the utmost composure, he again began in

a loud and powerful voice to beg the Lord Jesus to take him. "Lord," he cried, "dissolve this mud-walled cottage; thou knowest the walls have long been tottering; throw them down, O Lord, and receive my spirit into thy arms." And then, spreading forth his arms and seeming to pant, he said, "I want—" "What do you want, my brother?" I asked. "I feel," said he, "such a want to be with Christ." Presently a loud noise in his right ear startled him, and soon afterwards a similar sensation in the other. Regarding it as a symptom of death, he welcomed it. In like manner every other sign of approaching dissolution he welcomed as a messenger of good. He noticed his hands, arms, and legs losing sensation, and expressed pleasure. In a short time his voice began to fail, and his breathing became shorter, but he looked happy, and I said to him, "Death does not appear terrible to you, my brother?" "No," he replied, "I find nothing terrible yet." "May the Lord receive your spirit!" I said. "Do you not think he will?" "Yes," he whispered. In a few moments he turned his head and directed his eyes upwards, while a smile so sweet, so heavenly, lighted up his dying features, that I shall never forget it. His lips moved. I put my ear close to his mouth, and thought I heard the word "Jesus" twice, but could not be certain, it was so indistinct. In a few moments more I perceived an alteration in his respiration, and calling my mother to the bedside I said, "He is going, it is nearly over." There was a slight hiccough and a gentle gurgling, and his happy spirit flew to the presence of that dear Lord Jesus, whom he had so ardently breathed after.

INQUIRY.

Messrs. Editors,—A constant reader of your periodical would feel obliged by your opinion on the following question, viz., Whether it is consistent with true faith and a good conscience in a minister and people professing the doctrines of discriminating grace, to allow a large placard to be stuck in the front window of their chapel, announcing that two sermons will be preached on the following Lord's day in the Wesleyan chapel, by two reverend doctors, so-called, in aid of the trust fund of the Wesleyans; and also these so-called and professed Particular Baptists closing their doors and omitting their service on the evening of this Lord's day, in order to allow the church and congregation an opportunity of hearing these two reverend gentlemen, and of contributing towards the trust fund, when, strange to say, £128 was collected?

Near Wolverhampton, June 17th, 1850.

[Every one, we think, who knows anything experimentally and savingly of the truth, must feel that such proceedings are altogether inconsistent with a profession of discriminating grace. Though we believe there are quickened souls among them; yet, as a body, there are no more determined enemies of sovereign grace than the Wesleyans, and especially their ministers; to sanction, therefore, their preaching in the way above mentioned, is certainly to sanction openly error and falsehood.]

POETRY.

How gloomy is my way
 When darkness me surrounds,
 And through each cheerless day
 My foes and fears abound!
 How tedious is the toilsome load!
 When shall I reach the saints' abode?

My soul, thou long hast dwelt
 With him that hateth peace:
 When will sweet peace be felt,
 And all these warrings cease;
 These foes without and foes within,
 That fain would urge me on to sin?

Dear Lord, some help afford,
 Nor let my spirit fail;
 There's comfort in thy word;
 Let not my foes prevail.
 I seek thy aid, thou King of Kings;
 O let me hide beneath thy wings!

Thou knowst I have no might;
 Alone I cannot stand;
 No power have I to fight
 Against this warlike band:
 My eyes would fain look up to thee,
 Who knowst my deepest misery.

Satan, my deadly foe,
 Assaults my feeble soul;
 His malice thou dost know;
 Thou canst his power control:
 I know thou canst, Lord, if thou wilt;
 But, O! my soul's bow'd down with guilt.

I have a rebel been,
 A traitor to thy grace;
 Yielded to many a sin,
 Nor valued thy embrace:
 For when thy love my spirit cheer'd,
 My heart's grown hard and has not fear'd.

A proud rebellious worm;
 Ah, Lord, thou knowst me well!
 Should thy just anger burn,
 My soul must sink to hell:
 I tremble while I view the pit,
 For which my guilt has made me fit.

Yet must I ever bear
 Thy anger, gracious God?
 Can I endure thy sword,
 Who tremble at thy rod?
 Yet, trembling, Lord, I fain would flee,
 And hide my worthless soul in thee!

C. M.

We would fain grow notable by doing, it suits our legal spirit; but we can only grow valiant and successful by believing. When salvation-work is taken on ourselves, it rests on an arm of flesh, and a withered arm, which must fail; but when we wrestle by believing, the arm of Jesus is engaged to fight the battle, and he will and must bring victory, else his word and faithfulness would fail. — *Rutherford*.

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 a 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. 10.

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SORROW AND COMFORT; OR, CONFLICTS AND TRIUMPHS THE COMMON LOT OF ALL REAL BELIEVERS.

BY JOHN RUSK.

“The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.”—Prov. xiv. 10.

(Concluded from page 350.)

Christ never speaks to the hearts of his people by a “stranger,” however sound he may be in the letter. And although they may be taken with him for a time, yet the very many trials they are called to pass through, of which this “stranger” is ignorant, by constant prayer to the Lord discover such, so that they can make a private judgment of him; for, although he may speak of the temptations of believers, the corruptions of the heart, the trials of the way, &c., as well as the comfort which the child of God has, yet he never describes anything from his own experience; and the reason is, he has no experience of them. There is a secret between the Lord and his family which he knows nothing about, like some we read of that could not pronounce the word Shibboleth, but said Sibboleth. Christ’s voice is distinguished by his people. He speaks life when we are dead and lifeless in our frames, and sets us in tune for heavenly things. He speaks peace when we are in nothing but storms and commotions. He speaks health when our souls are in a sickly state. Justification also comes from his voice when but just before we feel condemnation on all hands: “I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.” He speaks with power when we are in a low place: “Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.” He

speaks in love to our souls when we have been running after idols: "Return, ye backsliding children, I am married unto you." In all these ways and many more Christ speaks. There is a voice in his chastening rod, in his providential dealings, and in his judgments abroad in the earth. But this "stranger" knows not the voice of Christ. Hence Christ says, "The sheep follow him, for they know his voice; and a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers." (John x. 4, 5.)

Again: We read of the "strange woman." Now, although the Proverbs may appear to have only a literal meaning, yet there is much more in what Solomon says about a "strange woman" than is meant literally. If this be denied, I ask what Solomon means when he says, "To understand a proverb and the interpretation thereof, the words of the wise and their dark sayings." Pray, what interpretation is required in that which is obvious to all? What is there dark in it, and what great wisdom do such manifest? So I conclude that this "strange woman" is a false church; and it will stand good if we consider it to be the church of Rome, which we all know is very grand and pompous, attended with great expense, everything in their worship being very costly, and set forth in an attractive way to deceive and to draw after it the corrupt heart of man. It is impossible to tell what immense sums of money, and all sorts of worldly property, the whore of Babylon has devoured, so that she may be beautiful to the eyes of men. Compare what I have hinted at with chap. vii., beginning at the 6th verse, and go on to the end.

And not only those who are professedly of the church of Rome, but all other false churches may be called "the strange woman;" and, indeed, those who come the nearest to the truth in the letter, while destitute of the power, are the worst and most trying to God's family. You may go and hear a man preach; and according to the light which God has given you, what he says may be undeniable truth, sound speech that cannot be condemned. You come away satisfied, are glad you went, and in simplicity tell others about the man. You go again and again; and although there may be much truth, yet there are things said that puzzle you. It is not straightforward work. But in time the very man that you were so taken with is discovered to hold an error, so that you would not hear him on any account. Now the fault lies with the man. He is not that honest-hearted character that you at first hoped he was. You are the same as ever, still after heart-work, after truth in its power. But he was lying in wait to deceive. Hence you read as follows respecting the "strange woman:" "Lest thou shouldst ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, that thou canst not know them." (Prov. v. 6.)

The principal work of a child of God is that of pondering the path of life. It is for this he hears, reads, meditates, confesses his sins to God, converses with the saints, calls upon the Lord in prayer, and searches the Scriptures. But this cunning fox, this scatterer, this hireling, this "strange woman," wriggles—her preaching is a mixture, her ways are moveable, and for this end: "lest," or for fear "thou shouldst ponder the path of life." I know what I here advance to be

a truth, and such are "strangers," although they may "understand all mysteries." They are strangers to spiritual life in their own souls, to a spiritual birth, and to communion and fellowship with the true God, for they know neither themselves nor him, although they may pretend to it. Yet God's people in time discover a sameness in them, and that there is no dew, no unction, no springing up; for they well know Christ's voice, as before observed; therefore they will not hear them.

IV. Having, then, shown briefly this "stranger," I am to show *that he does not intermeddle with this joy*, that is, with the joy that those experience who are acquainted with the bitterness of heart named in the text. Now, you and I are not to understand Solomon here to say that this "stranger" is careless altogether, and gives himself no concern about it. O no, this is not what he means; for he says also that "every fool will be meddling." "The labour of the foolish wearith every one of them," so all their labour is in vain. Paul tells us of some false brethren who crept in privately to spy out the liberty which they had in Christ. In this sense, therefore, they are very meddling. You may see plenty of this in the Pharisees in Christ's days. I understand Solomon in this text to mean that the "stranger" to this bitterness never gains his point; he cannot intermeddle with it so as properly to have this real joy himself. And Solomon himself will bear me out in another part of his Proverbs, where he shows that intermeddling has another meaning, and that is, to gain a point. Hence he says, "Through desire a man having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom."

"Through desire." This desire is a proof of spiritual birth, that such are regenerated, agreeable to which is what Peter says: "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."

"A man having separated himself." This man is a real child of God; and having been regenerated by the grace and Spirit of God, it is not force-work with him, but the real desire of his soul to obey God's word; and that word is, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate," &c.; to "forsake the foolish and live," and to "go in the way of understanding." Thus he separates himself. He also as he goes on will separate himself from carnal professors; and this is right, as you read, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away." He separates himself, too, or labours so to do, from self: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."

Again: It is said, "He seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom." He now seeks the Lord by secret prayer. He enters into his closet and shuts the door, and finds it better perhaps than a public prayer-meeting. He searches God's word: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word." He goes to hear those preachers who, as he believes, are the most tried and the best acquainted with heart-work, praying secretly to the Lord to bless his word, and that it may be made a blessing to his

soul. His heart and soul are in this. He is in earnest, for he sees and feels his lost estate, and the perilous condition all are in who are out of Christ. He knows that Christ Jesus is the "wisdom of God, and the power of God." And O how earnestly does he seek after this wisdom, that Christ may be formed in his heart, that God may reveal his Son in him, and that he may be made wise unto salvation! Every thing else appears empty and vain. He now follows after the Lord in chains, and would part with all he has (were he ever so rich) to obtain a hope. Thus he intermeddles with all true wisdom. And he does it not in vain, for the promise runs, "that we shall seek the Lord, and find him, when we shall search for him with all our heart."

Again: Such a one is very deeply taught to know his own heart, and he is constantly in fear that sin reigns in him. O could he but believe that it was sin raging, and not reigning! But he is so entangled every way that he can make nothing out. Thus is the man that intermeddleth, as I before said, with the wisdom which is from above, and never shall he be disappointed. But the others cannot intermeddle with this wisdom, nor with this joy, which comes from the true Wisdom, even Christ. Hence it is called the joy of the Lord, and Christ calls it his joy: "And that my joy may remain in you," &c.

Without enlarging, take it in brief, that this "stranger" neither knows himself nor God experimentally. He is a stranger to all soul travail, to striving at the strait gate, and to heart bitterness, so that he does not intermeddle (that is, he cannot get at it) with the real joy of God's elect. But say you, They have joy. Yes, they have, but not the "oil of joy," the unction of the Holy Spirit, in their hearts. Therefore, having nothing to feed the flame, when temptations and various oppositions come their lamp will go out. This is an awful, weighty, and searching truth.

V. I will now, according to promise, as the Lord shall assist me, close this subject with a *word of advice* both to myself and to the reader; for I do really see and feel myself to be one of the poorest and weakest creatures that ever lived, and I am wholly dependent on the Lord.

It is our lot to live in a very awful day, in very alarming times, called by Paul "perilous times;" and they are becoming so more and more. But the worst of all appears to me to be the divisions in the church of God, whose state calls aloud for a great purging. Professors and possessors are all mixed together, and a sound creed passes with many for vital godliness; and the few there are, comparatively, that abide steadfast are greatly shaken, and feel their love wax cold through iniquity abounding. Since the Lord removed that worthy servant of Christ, William Huntington, numberless preachers have come forward of all sorts, and some with gospel truths and gifts, but those that know the plague of the heart feel there is something wanting. They are not satisfied as they used to be. This is called by some a bigoted spirit. Let it be so. What I say is the truth, and we cannot be too bigoted for the truth. It is true that for fear of receiving

any error some, I believe, have rejected many good men, and they are wrong in so doing; for although it is lamentable that things are at a low ebb, yet there are some preachers scattered about, who are true in heart and have a single eye to the glory of God.

Having thus stated a few of the many things which show us that perilous times are coming, I now come to the word of advice. 1. Then, *let you and me be very diligent in private prayer.* I do not mean by this that any prayer may be neglected, but above all attend to private prayer, by ourselves alone. Hence we are told to enter into our closet, and to shut the door, &c. Jesus Christ suffered as none else ever could suffer; he "was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." He was whole nights in mountains by himself, praying to his heavenly Father. We therefore do right to be constantly crying in secret to the Lord; and the blessed Spirit will help our infirmities, and enable us to pour out our souls to God. But let us always entreat in the name and for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, and not attempt otherwise to approach an absolute God. To speak for myself, I find private prayer at times very profitable. When I have gone burdened, distressed, entangled, and, as it has appeared, every way wrong, and I have groaned and cried to the Lord in secret, the Lord has lifted me up, or strengthened me to bear the trial, encouraged me to hope in his mercy, weakened the temptation, and I have been sure that it was good for me to draw nigh unto God.

We are exhorted to this by the Lord himself in times of public calamity. Hence he says, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be over-past," &c. (Isa. xxvi. 20, 21.) And if we search God's word we shall find that prayer has done wonders; and what was written aforetime was for our example. O that the Lord would be pleased to pour upon his church in abundance in this our day the "spirit of grace and of supplications." Christ spake a parable to this end, "that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

2. Another thing I would advise is, *to be watchful*: "Watch unto prayer;" "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation;" "Watch and remember," &c.; "What I say unto you (his apostles) I say unto all, (that ever will be in the world of my chosen people.) Watch." This may take in as follows: Watch your weakest side, and level your prayer at that particular sin that easily besets you. Watch what particular state you are in when you go to prayer, and what when you come away, as to whether your burden is removed, or your faith and hope strengthened. Thousands speak sound words, that appear to the hearer like prayer; but they never watch, neither do they expect God to answer them. This is evident in reciting prayers at church after the minister. Some people are very dexterous at it, and yet they never prayed in their lives, nor watched unto prayer. But God will not let his family go on in this way. O no. Some may call all this legal; but it is Christ's word to his own people, and you and I are not to be wise above what is written. God forbid. It is in this way God will bless us: "Blessed is that servant whom when his Lord cometh he shall find watching."

Reader, it is not a careless, loose profession of Christ that will do. All this will bring the rod upon us, procure much furnace-work, and cause us to go with our heads bowed down, and crying, "My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me!" The prophet Habakkuk went in quite a different way from such careless, carnal professors as I have been treating of; hence he says, "I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me and what I shall answer when I am reproved." (Hab. ii. 1.) The prophet was no stranger to his own heart. He was well taught to feel how bent to backslide he was, as we all are, so that after examination he is led by the Holy Spirit to watch unto prayer; and he did not watch in vain. Hence he says, "And the Lord answered me and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." And it was this: "The just shall live by his faith." Now, although the prophet was fearful perhaps that he should be reproved, (as I said, knowing his own heart,) yet we do not find that God reproved him. But the reproof was for others, who were lifted up, their hearts going after idols, which you may see if you read through the chapter. Thus it is a most blessed thing to watch. David is another that watched unto prayer. He is brought into great distress and trouble: "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord." Then there is a deep sense of his sins: "If thou, O Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord, who shall stand?" And after waiting on the Lord he felt a hope: "In his word do I hope; my soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning;" and he repeats it. After watching he gained the point, and says, "With the Lord there is mercy, and with him there is plenteous redemption." Ah, reader! there is much gained by watching the Lord's hand with us. (Psalm cxxx.)

3. Another thing I would enforce is *singularity*. I do not mean singularity for the sake of being singular. Some have done this for by ends. But I mean from a point of conscience; and also because there is much spirituality gained in this way. You will never find a gossiping professor, that is always running about, alive to God. No, he is not one that watches unto prayer, but is all noise. Nor do I mean by this a forsaking of the society of saints. There is a temptation which Satan tries at, and that is, extremes of what may be good in their beginning; either to be of this gossiping tribe, for instance, or else to speak to none; and both are wrong, according to Scripture. As one that has obtained mercy, I would give myself and you the following advice, and that is, Let us choose for our companions such as are well acquainted with their own hearts feelingly, that have conquered work, sometimes a little up, and then down again; such as we are persuaded are honest at heart, and such as know from a blessed experience the benefit of a Saviour's death.

But again: Choose such as are clear in the truth, sound, orthodox gospel truth, joined with the experience I have mentioned, and whose outward walk is consistent with their profession. Now all this is right. But still, private work must not be neglected; and, indeed, the more of the latter than the former. When Paul writes to Timothy, he

tells him wherein this singularity consists. I will quote some of the things which the apostle exhorts him to: "Not to give heed to fables and endless genealogies." Then he speaks of some that desire to be teachers of the law, "knowing neither what they say nor what they affirm." Then he speaks of some that would separate conscience from faith, and made shipwreck. All this is in the 1st chapter. Again: he tells him to refuse profane and old wives' fables, and to attend to reading, exhortation, and doctrine; to meditate on these things, and to give himself wholly to them, (mark that, wholly to them,) that his profiting may appear unto all: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." (1 Tim. iv. 15, 16.) Again: he tells him to withdraw from all such as consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ; such as have sinister views, like Bye-ends in Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," who supposed that gain was godliness, &c. "But thou, O man of God, flee these things." This you have in chapter vi. Paul also says, that such will not endure sound doctrine, but "after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." (2 Tim. iv. 3, 4.)

From what has been said, in connexion with other parts of Holy Writ, you may see what I intend by singularity. David tells us whom he approved of: "My delight is with the excellent of the earth, and with such as excel in virtue." There are three things in a real believer that must go together if he is one that excels in virtue. I say they must go together:

First, He must be inwardly taught by the Holy Spirit's teaching his true state in the Adam-fall transgression; that he is altogether as an unclean thing, and that all his righteousnesses are as filthy rags. Thousands agree to all this, and much more, who never felt it. After this, the poor sinner is led to Christ as a fountain, which cleanses him from all sin, and to feel that his righteousness is imputed to him. This is what we call real, sound experience.

Secondly, As such go on they will grow; and their growth is in a deeper knowledge of their own vileness, and likewise of the infinite worth of Jesus. Therefore they hold fast sound doctrine, and will contend for it, and will not connive and keep back, saying nothing when the enemies of truth are enforcing errors. No, the love of truth will fire their souls, and the cause of God will lie near their hearts; so that to insult the truth will be worse to them than insulting themselves. Thus experience and doctrine must go together and the doctrine must be according to godliness.

Thirdly, A practical life and walk consistent with all this: for "the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men." But in what sense does it appear unto all men? How can they know what experience you and I have? Is this not a secret work, between God and ourselves? Truly it is. But what appears to all men is the outward walk and deportment, for this grace teaches us who are the happy recipients of it, "to deny ungodliness and

worldly lusts; and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world."

Now, separate these three things, and such are backslidden, and do not excel in virtue. They are like links in a chain, and a golden chain it is. The Lord grant, reader, that you and I may have these three things!

4. *Cleave close to the Lord.* Now, this takes in several things, and they are all private. Let me notice a few. There is plenty of outside religion in the world; and, according to appearance, we should think that the subjects of such were the only Christians. But, reader, they are deceiving themselves. They are like the Pharisees of old, all their works are done to be seen of men. Now this cleaving to the Lord, as I said, takes in,

First, Close examination. You and I cannot always conclude, comfortably, that we are real believers. O no. It is only now and then that this is enjoyed; and many things will come in our way that to us appear to contradict this: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith." The way this is done is, trying ourselves by God's word, to see if we have the experience of Bible saints, how we agree with them, and where we come short.

Secondly, Honest confession to the Lord of what is wrong. This is the way to "make straight paths for our feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way." And if you belong to God, you will find that you cannot go on without these things.

Thirdly, Pleading the promises God has made to us in Christ Jesus. Are we filthy? there is the fountain of his blood, and it is ever open for sin and for uncleanness. Are we condemned? he is the end of the law for righteousness. Are we accused by Satan? he is our Advocate, to plead our cause and to execute judgment for us. Are we ignorant? he is the great Prophet of the church, to teach and instruct us. Have we any thing in our experience that is knotty? he is Wisdom itself. Are we in temporal want? he is the Heir of all things. Does Satan try to reign over us? he is our King, and never will suffer it. Now, pleading these promises I have often found to be sweet work.

Fourthly, Ascribing all the glory of every individual thing from the heart unto the Lord; cleaving to, and delighting ourselves in the Almighty. You will find this no easy thing; almost every thing within and without will make against you.

Fifthly, All this private work, and cleaving to the Lord, will furnish you in such a way, that you will be useful to God's family. Really, if people did but know the worth of a private religion, they would not run after every Lo here and Lo there, and get so confused and perplexed as they do. O what need is there for us to cry to the Lord the Spirit to lead us, and to guide us into all truth; for we are as weak as water, and as helpless spiritually as a new-born babe literally!

Sixthly, Shun, as much as possible, the company of worldly men. In our business, we cannot help being among them. But when not in business, if we unite with them, we shall find it a snare. Jehosha-

phat, a good king, was much ensnared in this way, and God was angry with him. Peter had better been cold, than warming himself by the fire and denying his Lord. We are told to come out from amongst them, and to be separate, and not to touch the unclean thing.

Thus I have given my advice, and I need the same advice myself.

5. To conclude, and to bring our religion to a small compass, we need constantly to be *crying to the Lord*: "Pray without ceasing;" then watching his hand in all things: "That thine hand might be with me," says Jabez. We must ask every favour, both in providence and in grace, in the name and for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, and entreat the Holy Spirit to help our infirmities, and to testify of Christ, to witness our adoption, to guide us into all essential truth, and constantly to renew us in the spirit of our minds, and to keep us from every error and every false way. We have much to encourage us in this delightful work, because all the promises are made to the poor, needy, weak, fatherless, lost, perishing, sick, fearful, faint, feeble, in short, every one that is in the path of tribulation. And the intention of all this is to keep us self-emptied, and that Jesus Christ might be all to us and all in us; and that we might be formed for himself, to show forth his praise: "Trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." This is the principal reason why the heart must know its own bitterness; and all those who are strangers to heart-work, and never are acquainted with these bitters, never shall taste real joy, in this world or in the world to come.

May the Lord own and honour his own truth to the good of his family, and all the glory shall be ascribed to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three Persons in one God, now and for ever. Amen.

[What excellent advice does Rusk conclude his piece with! How wise, how suitable is it! How equally remote from Pharisaic self-righteousness and Antinomian licentiousness! May we have grace to follow it!]

SHORT DISCOURSES BY MR. HUNTINGTON.

No. 2.

"For he that is dead is freed from sin."—Rom. vi. 7.

The elect of God, as well as all others, are by nature dead; they are dead in sin, living without any spiritual life; and to be carnally-minded is death: they are without any affection for God, motion towards him, delight in him or in his service; and they are dead in law, being condemned in Adam, for judgment by one offence came upon all men to condemnation; and they are under the curse of the law, and by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

In this state the law could give us no strength to obey its precepts, and consequently it could give us no life; for all our obedience thereto is only dead works. But "what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the like-

ness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh," hath done for us. Christ was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh. "The children being partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same." And to him were our actual transgressions and inbred corruptions imputed. "He was made sin for us," and he stood charged with the whole of our sins, and was arraigned and condemned, "being numbered with the transgressors;" and, under the sentence that fell on him, "our sins were condemned in his flesh." He dies the death of the cross, and "makes his soul an offering for sin." And "our old man is crucified with him," and we too, for we died in our Head by virtue of a preceding union with him. "I am crucified with Christ," says Paul; I died in my Head; in him I have died the death due to me for sin by virtue of my union with him, and by his being cut off, not for himself, but for me; in him I died, in him I suffered the law; "for if one died for all, then were all dead" when he died. And in this sense we were all dead together; the Head and all the members in him. But there is a voice in the promise: "Thy dead men shall live," saith God. "With my dead body shall they arise," saith the Saviour. And in our Head we all arose. "Ye are risen with Christ; God hath quickened you together with him, having forgiven all your trespasses;" his blood has purged your sins; his resurrection is a pledge of ours, and eternal life is in him for all his members.

To let us know this, the law that cast, condemned, and cursed to death the covenant Head, who was made sin for us, that law comes to us, sin revives, and we die; which is a planting us together in the likeness of his death: the Spirit directs the eye of faith to the death and atonement of Christ, and quickens us by his influence; and we rise under the operation of the Spirit of God, and are planted together in the likeness of his resurrection. Now we live no more in the old way; we are dead, buried, and risen with Christ. To the lust of men, to the lust of the flesh, to the will of men, to sin, and to the law, we live no more.

"Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." We are dead to self. "No man liveth unto himself nor dieth unto himself. Whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's." And to this end "Christ died, rose again, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and of the living;" the Lord of those elect souls who are as yet dead in sin, and of them that are already quickened. He is dead to sin and lives no longer therein. He is dead to the law by the sentence passed on the body of Christ, and by the sentence felt in himself; and expects no life from that. And by a sweet union to Christ, and the enjoyment of it; by communion with the saints, and affection for them, "he is crucified to this world;" he can find no life in the company of the dead; "and the world is crucified to him;" they can find no delight, or life, in the company of one that is dead to sin and alive to God.

The old life, and all old things, are now passed away, and all things are become new. He is born again, walks in newness of life, in a new and living way; lives by faith on the Son of God, or the risen

Saviour lives in him; he has a new heart and a new spirit; he speaks with a new tongue; finds new desires and new delights; pursues a new end, and chooses new company; the form of godliness passes away, and every branch of vital godliness is entirely new to him.

And "he that is dead is freed from sin." What! from the in-being of it? No. "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Are we freed from the in-dwelling of it? No. "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." Is it a freedom from the oppositions, motions, and struggles of it? No. "I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind." Are we free from all slips and falls into it? No. "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not." "In many things we offend in all." "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults." "For the just man falleth seven times, and riseth again." "And if thy brother sin against thee until seventy times seven, and turn again, and say, I repent, thou shalt forgive him." Are we freed from all carnal desires after evil? No. "Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." "The spirit in man lusteth to envy." Are we freed from all the usurped power of sin? No. "The good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that do I." But are we freed from it in the house of prayer, and when engaged in God's service? No. Groundless fear and trembling are often in the pulpit, and carnal wanderings in the pew. "When I would do good evil is present with me." Is there nothing in us that serves evil? Yes. "So, then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

What is this freedom then? Answer: The new man of grace is put on, which is created in righteousness and true holiness; such are new creatures in Christ and complete in him.

The old man is put off, as condemned, crucified, dead, and buried, by the sacrifice of Christ for sin; and therefore saith Paul, "It is no more I (the new man) that do it," but the old man. "It is sin that dwelleth in me," which evil I would not, which I hate, which is the source of all my misery. "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened;" having a soul on the stretch for heaven, and yet clogged with corruption.

What is this freedom, then? Freedom from the reign of sin: for grace shall reign in every believer, over sin, to eternal life; but sin never shall reign in a believer over grace, to eternal death, for "the just man shall live by his faith." We are freed from sin touching the hand-writing, or debt book, that was open against us. The hand-writing is blotted out and nailed to his cross; and so are our transgressions blotted out as a cloud, and as a thick cloud our sins. Freed from the destroying power of sin, and from the imputation of it. Sin shall not be our ruin, for "Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord will not impute sin." Freed from all liability to eternal punishment on the account of sin. "The sins of Israel shall be sought for, but there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, but they shall not be

found; for I will pardon them whom I reserve." Christ shall present us to himself a glorious church, having neither spot nor wrinkle.

I am redeemed from all evil; the price of my ransom is paid; I am justified freely from all things. And who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died to expiate my crimes; and is risen again to see me justified, and to plead my cause and revenge my wrongs. I am in Christ, and there is no condemnation to them that are in him; I have the law of faith (by which I am to live) written on the tables of my heart, and that law of the Spirit of life in Christ has made me free from the law of sin, which is in my members, and from the law of death engraven on tables of stone.

Moreover, my body is the temple of the Holy Ghost; he has taken possession of it, and dwells in it, and is the pledge and earnest of the future inheritance, and has sealed me up to the last day of redemption; that is, the redemption of my body from the grave, which will be revealed in the last times, when Christ will be the plague of death and the destruction of the grave; when the last enemy, death, shall be destroyed, and he that only hath immortality be all in all. This is Paul's language.

Furthermore, God's promised grace is sufficient for me. What I am as a saint, an apostle, or as fruitful, "by the grace of God I am what I am," saith Paul. If my success is great in conversion, in victory, gifts, fortitude, I am not the labourer, "but the grace of God that is with me:" that which changed my heart at first was "the abundance of his grace upon me."

If I stand fast, it is by faith; and I am a debtor to his grace both for my faith and my standing. Should I fall, I shall not be utterly cast down, for grace shall raise me again; should I backslide, he will heal my backslidings, and grace shall restore me. His grace is sufficient for me.

Thus am I free. If I look to the law, the hand-writing is blotted out and nailed to his cross. If I look to the book of God's remembrance, the debt is cancelled, and God will remember my sins no more. If I look to justice, it is satisfied, and God is just in forgiving me my sins, and in cleansing me from all unrighteousness. Nor is he unrighteous, to forget my works of faith and labours of love; nor will his justice forbid me the crown of righteousness when I have finished my warfare; no, the righteous Judge will give it me in that day. If I look to Christ, I am complete in him; if I look to God the Father, it is he that justified me; and if I look to my infirmities within, it is sin that dwelleth in me, for my soul hates evil. My will is sanctified: "I would do good;" my mind is renewed: "With the mind I myself serve the law of God." My affections are sanctified: "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." I will glory therefore in my infirmities, for they drive me from all confidence in the flesh, and make me cleave the closer to Christ, and rejoice in him; they keep me humble, watchful, and grateful to my Saviour for so great a salvation. I have renounced all that I was, and all that I

had, and have received Christ as all in me and all to me. I am a dead man in his death and in the law; and, as such, he took possession of me, and I live by him; yet, not I, but Christ lives in me, shines out of me, speaks by me, and mightily works in me. I fill up the measure of his suffering in my flesh, and his strength is made perfect in my weakness; his wisdom is displayed in my ignorance, his beauty in my deformity, and his matchless grace in my preservation and salvation, and in the salvation of all that believe on his name. "For me to live is Christ, (for he lives in me,) and to die is gain," for Christ is the portion of my soul and my all in all. "He that is dead is freed from sin."

THE VOICE OF THE LORD IS POWERFUL.

Dear Friend,—May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied unto you.

From a union of soul to you for truth's sake, I feel an impression to drop you a few lines, hoping they will find you in health of body and soul. I have had a very sharp trial, both in body and mind, for this last fortnight. So much so, that I despaired of life for both body and soul; and began to dread that what I have greatly feared many times was come to pass at last—that I had wearied out the tender mercies of a kind and covenant God and Father; for he had hid his face from me, and sent affliction upon the body. I was racked with pain day and night; the precious Bible a sealed book; not the least appearance of a grain of faith, love, patience, hope, humility, or resignation to the will of God; and legions of devils roaring in my heart against my dear Lord, who has been so very good to me for so many years. O my dear friend, I was sunk very, very low. I sat upon my chair and I wept like a child, and cried out from my very soul, "Dear Lord, I have been a poor pauper upon thee for near sixty years, and thou hast never failed me yet; hast thou left me at last? Is thy mercy clean gone for ever? Wilt thou be favourable no more?" My very soul breathed it out unto God; and you know God will regard the prayer of the destitute, and he will stand at the right hand of the poor to deliver him from those that condemn his soul. Yea, our God has engaged that "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." And I can bear witness that he is a God that heareth and answereth the cry of the poor and needy; for he spoke these words in my soul with such light, power, and sweetness, that all was well and right in a moment: "Charity never faileth." O blessed words! How they caused my soul to look back for about fifty-five years, when charity picked me up out of the devil's kingdom; and how surprisingly charity has helped, defended, supplied, and delivered me out of all distresses to the present moment; yea, and he spoke it again, "Charity never faileth." It never has done, nor ever shall. O how my

soul did but thank and bless my God and Saviour that I was a poor beggar and pauper feasting upon charity! And I do believe that these poor beggars well served with charity are the richest and happiest souls in the world; for "the blessing of the Lord maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it." "A little, with the fear of the Lord, is better than great treasures and trouble therewith." "A dinner of herbs where love is, is better than a stalled ox and hatred therewith." My very soul could not help bursting out in a song of praise.

"When Jesus with his mighty love
Visits my troubled breast,
My doubts subside, my fears remove,
And I'm completely blest;
"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."

O how my soul could sing it with melody in my heart, till I fell upon his bosom, and had no will but his!

"It is the Lord, should I distrust,
Or contradict his will?
Who cannot do but what is just,
And must be righteous still.
"How can my soul, with hopes like these,
Be sullen or repine?
My gracious God! take what thou please,
But teach me to resign."

O the blessedness of feasting upon charity! I believe it is a drop of that immortal blessedness where the redeemed are singing, "Unto Him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, be honour and glory for ever."

My dear brother pauper, for I believe you are upon the beggars' list, and have to beg and knock at charity's door for every blessing you need for both body and soul, for time and eternity, well, bless the Lord, and we shall never fail; for all our help and supplies come from charity, and "charity never faileth." There is an inexhaustible store of all supplies for poor destitute beggars that have no where else to flee to, or hope in, but the rich storehouse, Christ: "For it hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." And what a sweet declaration from the Holy Father: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him!" And O how you and poor worthless I have been favoured with moments to sit at his feet, and hear his blessed words, that have melted our hard hearts, and moulded our very souls into his image, that so we could love him, adore him, thank and praise him, till our very souls have been lost in wonder and admiration at his tender pity, kind compassion, and loving-kindness towards such poor helpless, detestable, ragged, groaning, mourning, fearing, despairing wretches, that were robbed, and spoiled, and immured in holes, and hid in the prison-house, and

none said, Restore; and none could restore but He that speaks as never man speaks: "Loose him, and let him go." O! my dear friend, the voice of the Lord is powerful, is it not? I know both you and poor I have both seen and felt it. The voice of the Lord is full of majesty; yea, it divides the flames of fire; and such peace and love, such humbleness, tenderness of conscience, godly remembrance, meekness, and confidence, flow into our souls, and flow up to our covenant God and Saviour, as produce such pleasure, peace, and joy as I cannot describe better than one on the same begging list has described it: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside the still waters, he restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." O blessed, blessed name's sake! It does my soul good. "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." O blessed, blessed charity! that covers such a tremendous multitude of sins, that not one spot or wrinkle is to be seen or found. Truly, where much is forgiven they love much; for "perfect love casteth out fear" and torment. My very soul feels the earnest longing of the apostle: "May the Lord direct your heart and mine, with all the elect of God, into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ;" for there are no bands or fetters here: no prejudice, malice, guile, nor evil-speaking here; but loving one another, bearing with one another, serving one another, forgiving one another. I know it; for my soul feels it in that measure which pleaseth the Father of all comfort to reveal in my heart, that "charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; regardeth not iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Bless the Lord, "charity never faileth."

My dearly beloved friend and brother pauper upon charity, may God keep you and me very poor, but rich in love; weak as water, "but strong in the Lord and in the power of his might;" blind as a bat, but light in the Lord; naked as an infant cast out into the open field to the loathing of its person, but adorned and covered with the glorious robe of righteousness; poor helpless nothings, and Christ all and in all. But methinks my dear friend is ready to say, Where is the poor old man crawling too? Not one hair's breadth further than the dew draws poor little fearful creatures, the love, the heavenly moisture that drops from covenant love, that drops into the soul as rain upon the new-mown grass, and his speech that distils as the dew.

"Fear not, then, worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." Yea, my friend, it matters not who is offended at poor mourners coming out of their holes; and they will come when the dew falls, for this is God's testimony: "I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew of Israel. He shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon; his branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the

olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return: they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine, the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim shall say, (My soul hath said it, my soul doth say it,) What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him. I am like a green fir tree: from me is thy fruit found. Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but transgressors shall fall therein." But I am afraid my long scrawl will tire you. I felt a strong impression to drop you a line. I hope you will in love and charity cover all imperfections and blunders. God bless you and yours, with all friends, with the best of blessings, is the prayer of the poor old worthless worm,

J. W.

Trowbridge, July 31st, 1850.

FRAGMENT.

There are several capacities in which "the Father loveth the Son." He loves him as his Son and he loves him as his Servant; he loves him as God, the Second Person of the glorious Trinity, and he loves him as Mediator, God-man. He loves him, I say, as God the Son; therefore called "the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father." (John i. 18.) This is expressed in terms adapted to our capacity; but it is a mystery too deep for us to fathom; for how one divine Person loves another divine Person, none but a divine Person can understand. How the Father loves the Son, none but the Father and the Son can comprehend. As he is begotten of the Father by an eternal and an ineffable generation, so he is loved of the Father by an eternal and ineffable love. The Father cannot but love him as he loves himself; for as in respect of his nature and essence he is one God with the Father and eternal Spirit, so, in respect of his personality, he is his Father's exact picture, being the image of the invisible God, and the express image of his person. Again, he loves him as Mediator, God-man; in which office he is the Father's Servant on our behalf: "Behold my Servant, whom I uphold." (Isa. lxii. 1.) This is what most concerns us; for what would it avail us to hear only that the Father loveth the Son, if we had no share of that love? But, behold, here is the good news of the gospel, that the Father loveth the Son as he is clothed with the office of a Mediator and Saviour, to save the like of you and me. He loves him as his Servant, whom he hath chosen to his office; he loves him as his Anointed, whom he hath qualified for this work: "I have put my Spirit upon him, and he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles;" that is, to bring forth light and salvation to the Gentiles; for he loves and delights in him as one whom he hath given for a "covenant of the people, for a light to the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison."—*Ralph Erskine.*

I HAVE CHOSEN THEE IN THE FURNACE OF AFFLICTION.

My very dear Brother,—Many things I could offer as an apology for not writing sooner to tender my best thanks for your kind letter, which has been read and re-read by me many times over, to the strengthening of my weary soul.

There have been times when I have felt a desire to unbosom my joys to you, but generally at such periods I have lacked strength of body; at other times I have felt full of sorrow, and have deemed that poor tidings to send to one already bowed down under the weight of various afflictions. But with truth I can say, not a day, no nor many hours have past, but my esteemed brother has been present to my memory, and when enabled, I have remembered him in the best sense. I thought much of you yesterday, when capable of doing so; but I was very ill all day, and am very unwell to-day. I have had the pen and ink by me nearly all day, waiting for resolution to begin.

I have not, I assure you, written so much as you may suppose. I have many letters lying by me for more than a year or two unanswered. I feel very differently in regard to writing from what I did two or three years ago. Then, if I let the bucket down I in general drew up some little water; but now I often lack faith to let it down, and sometimes when I do, I draw it up dry. At other times I am blest in the attempt. I am willing to own there is a great deal of listlessness and spiritual sloth about me which I did not use to feel so much as I do now. Do pray, my dear brother, that spiritual strength and energy may be given me to shake it off.

O how good the Lord is to me a poor worm, thus to bear with my waywardness and wandering! If I had not an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the Righteous, what would become of me? Why, the Lord would cease to be gracious, my lamp of profession would go out, and I should in my soul go back to the beggarly elements of this deceitful world. But "He ever liveth to make intercession" for me. I know he does by the sweet peace I am at times favoured to enjoy, the desires that spring up in my heart, and the blessed promises that sometimes drop in to comfort and refresh my weary soul. I know it to be the work of the ever-blessed Spirit, because it often comes unsought for, and when least expected.

When the set time to favour Zion is come, the Lord gives the blessing; yet there are many things that he will be inquired of for a long time ere he bestows them. He will try our faith and empty our hearts so completely of self and everything of the creature, as to make us receive it entirely at his hands, and to make us willing to yield him all the glory. Many things that I have asked him for I have had to wait and "watch unto prayer" for for months and years in some instances; but in his own good time I have proved him to be a God hearing and answering prayer, though generally it has been in a very different way from what I expected. To the creature it is often very humbling, but to the magnifying of his own great name.

I often wonder at my unbelief after such signal answers to prayer;

but it is a marked proof of the depravity of human nature. O how quickly would I divest myself of such feelings of hardness of heart if I could! but I have no power to do so. If persons had told me years ago, when I was in my first love, of such feelings, I never could have believed their testimony, but should have thought they were ignorant of God's ways and love to his people. Yet I have since proved that He teaches "hard things" as well as easy, and have experienced it, to draw forth the evil nature, which had lain dormant and covered over before. But God will make it manifest in some way or other; and how could this knowledge be attained, if the evils of our heart were permitted to remain hidden? We never should get versed enough in it to abhor ourselves, and to make us repent, as it were, in dust and ashes.

I can assure you, my dear Brother, that sackcloth is often the covering of my mind, on account of my numerous transgressions; but when sufficiently humbled, how graciously does the dear Lord remove it, and give me "the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." He tells me my sins are all blotted out, and my transgressions covered. I can then rejoice in His finished work, and with the "clean hands" of faith wrap His dear robe of righteousness around my soul, and believe I am all fair in the pure sight of the Most High God. Neither foes, troubles, trials, nor unbelief, can then injure or affright my soul, nor cause me to hang my harp upon the willow, for God is my salvation, and in Him my soul rejoices; and it would continue much longer to rejoice, were it not for the weakness of the flesh; in some way or other it sides with Satan, who is ever on the alert, striving to puff me up with pride, or persuade me there was no reality in my enjoyment. I often think I am more ignorant of his devices than any, and more easily drawn aside by his subtlety.

One thing encourages me, however, and that is, neither by force nor fraud can he prevail on me "to cast away my confidence, which has great recompense of reward." At the darkest seasons, when doubts and fears are busy, and the enemy suggesting "hard thoughts" of God, yet there is at the bottom this "confidence," out of which hope springs up as an anchor to the soul, which, having its hold in that within the veil, prevents my trembling soul from being tossed about with the winds of temptation as it otherwise would be.

When under such depression of spirits, I often think of you, my much-tried brother, knowing you bear much of similar discipline; and I wonder how you can stand up to speak for God, and declare his faithful dealings to his people. Then, again, I remember, the work is not your own, you are only a pipe for His blessed Spirit to speak through, and therefore your own feelings have nothing to do with it; besides, "the husbandman must first be partaker of the fruits," and if you had never passed through such feelings, you could not relate them, to strengthen the faith of those exercised in the same way, so that doubtless it is all wisely ordered.

I know you will fall in with me in the assertion, that God is no hard master, but a kind, indulgent parent, who, although He is

obliged to be firm with us, as a wise father to his beloved offspring, yet is His love as strong and as unabated towards us, as though He were always bestowing sensible love tokens upon us; and I have no doubt that He bestows many a present penny on you as a reward for your arduous labours for Him, and great will be your reward when your labour is ended, and your day's work done; for "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." May many souls be your joy and crown of rejoicing in the world to come. So prays your affectionate

G—, June 14th, 1849.

A. W.

[The writer of the above letter is a person who has been bed-ridden for several years, but who has been blessed in her affliction with pardon and peace. She has never heard a gospel sermon since she was called by grace. Her bodily pain is at times very great, and mental trials severe. These particulars have been furnished by a friend of ours who is well acquainted with her.]

A LETTER BY THE LATE MR. W. J. BROOK, OF BRIGHTON, ADDRESSED TO THE CHURCH AT B—.

To the Strangers scattered abroad into many places, in the cloudy and dark day, but gathered together in one common Head, their unworthy servant sendeth greeting. Unbelief is the enemy of your souls, and this is found by daily experience. Strange as it may appear, through this the needy refuses supplies, the sick man a remedy, the poor abundance, the helpless a Friend, the wanderer a Guide, the sad a Comforter, the destitute a Refuge, and the perishing a Saviour. It is this which makes the wife hate the best of Husbands, makes the child rebellious to the best of Fathers, sets us at variance with the best of Friends, makes us loath the daintiest food, and refuse the richest cordials. It is this which feeds the flesh and starves the soul, prefers a shadow to a substance, time to eternity, a wretched, ruined present world to a future eternal weight of glory. In the sight of the best of raiment, it makes the naked stand trembling with the cold; before the best spread table, it makes the hungry pinch his belly; with promised strength to overcome the world, it causes us to flee at the shaking of a leaf; it gives existence to things which are not, and to things which are it denies reality. It breeds distrust in the most solemn of oaths, and lends an ear to the vainest of fables; divine truth it discredits, and reposes the fullest confidence in a human lie. It makes us esteem a foreign land our own country, account our dearest connexions strangers and aliens, and our only home not half so good as a common inn. Such is unbelief, and a thousand thousand times worse.

But notwithstanding all our unbelief, there is One that remains faithful. The Faithful and True Witness never can deny himself; and what is still better, he is one that does not stand at a distance from us, though we do from him. Long before we knew him, he remembered us in our lowest estate; he took upon himself our nature and became man; and when he became man, he

lowered himself indeed; lower he came than the beasts, for so he saith: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." And this man is to be our Peace, or the Peacemaker, when the Assyrian shall come into the land. A refuge in the time of trouble he is appointed to be: "For a man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and as a covert from the tempest." A *man*. But, say you, a man is a deceitful, desperately wicked and weak being. But "a *man* shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and as a covert from the tempest." (Isa. xxxii. 2.) Man is a thing of nought, dust and ashes, a worm, &c. "And as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, the Son of God also took part of the same, that through death," &c. Hence you hear him say, "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death; I am a worm, and no man." Man is weak, and so was this Man. "I can," says he, "of my own self do nothing." "I am poor," says he, "and needy." Man is cursed; and so was he; for "he was made a curse for us." Man is sorrowful; so was he: "A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." "I am poor," says he, "and sorrowful." Man is a sinner; and so was he: "My sins are more in number than the hairs of my head." Man is often forsaken; and so was he: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Man is tempted; and so was he: "Tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." Man is in fear of damnation; so was he; he cried to Him that was able to save him from death. Man must die; and so did he: "He died for us." This *Man* is to be a Hiding-place from the wind, &c.

But what man *wants* that he is, as well as what man is. We want righteousness; he is our righteousness. He obeyed the law. Strength too; he is that: "My strength is made perfect in weakness." Holiness; he is that. Without spot was he; and so are we. He is life to us that are dead; a blessing to us cursed; riches to us that are poor; fulness to us that are empty; eternal consolation to us that are wretched. All these things, and more than these, he is to us. What, then, is wanting? Why, faith. "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me." And by faith we believe in him, and through him; we by him "believe in God, who raised him from the dead." This is his own grace, bestowed in his own good time. "And he that believeth shall not be confounded." Why not? Why, "a *man* shall be (and is) as an hiding-place from the wind." It is this faith which I have preached among you, and which you have received, acknowledging no other doctrine than this: "He that believeth shall be saved." Many are the degrees and measures of this faith. But let the measure or degree be what it may, saving faith is a gift, and a gift by grace. It is appointed for those that ask; and as the Giver has come so low, so near, and so condescending as to be a man, we are

* That is, by *imputation*. The sinlessness of Christ's human nature—the imputation of sin to him—and the righteousness that he wrought out, are all beautifully brought together in one verse: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. v. 21.)

encouraged to ask freely: "Whatsoever ye shall ask, that ye shall have," without respect to any one thing but our wants. He takes no notice of our worthiness, (for we have none,) nor yet of our vileness, for this he has taken away. It is enough that we feel our wants.

You may perhaps wonder that I have not written to you before. Work here has been the cause, and nothing else. I have often remembered you, and believe I always shall, having you in my heart to live and die. Farewell! The God of peace be with you! So prays your affectionate friend and servant,

W. J. B.

EXPERIENCE OF WILLIAM HARLEY.

(Continued from page 340.)

When it happened again that my companion came in while I was at prayer, I did indeed continue it, but, alas! I was not in real prayer; for, instead of having my mind upon God, the Object of my worship, my mind ran more upon the creature, who interrupted me with talking to me; and not meeting with a ready answer, called to know if I were asleep, or in a fit, or where I was; till with shame and confusion of face, I was forced off my knees with these words: "Be not deceived, God is not mocked."

O! thought I, I had better not pray at all, than to mock God therein, by muttering I know not what, or at best but multiplying "words without knowledge." (Job xxxviii. 2.)

I then endeavoured to satisfy myself without prayer, and thought that without a fitter opportunity God would not require it of me; as though God were any gainer by my being religious; not considering that God needs none of the services of his creatures, even the most exalted of them; much less "can man be profitable to his Maker, as he that is wise may be profitable to himself, for if we be righteous we give nothing unto him." But alas! I could not be satisfied without prayer; for God was pleased to ring an alarm in my soul by that scripture, which I then thought, and still think, stands so awfully against prayerless persons: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." (Psalm ix. 17.) I now know that persons may be said to forget God by idolatry, by distrust either of God's providence or grace, or of his promises, or by a trust in or fondness for creatures; but the light I then saw these words in was a forgetting to pray unto God, a seuse I think in no way foreign to, but included in them.

Hereupon I renewed my attempts, and as often met with interruptions; till one night, when it pleased God that I should be more than ordinarily assisted by him, and I had great liberty in prayer, when I seemed so far to forget myself, that I made supplication to God with my voice, when my former disturber was not suffered in the least to interrupt me; but overawed, as it were, seemed to sit motionless with surprise. Surely the word of God is quick and powerful, not only in convincing the soul, but also in restraining the

carnal mind. And having been helped to break through the bonds of shame and fear, I could with more and more freedom go to prayer before him. Nevertheless, I met with some further obstructions, which arose partly from a legal spirit within me and partly from Satan's temptations. For if at any time in the day I had been light or trifling in my spirit or conversation, I thought to be serious at night would savour of hypocrisy; and with what face, thought I, can I pray against sin, when I am conscious that I have this day done what I ought not to have done? And thus one sin leads to another; for being brought to the omission of prayer one night, though I might have behaved with greater circumspection the next day, yet to pray one night and not another must be hypocritical; when it was suggested to me, that as hypocrites cannot be heard, being insincere, it was better not to pray at all, as "the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord." (Proverbs xv. 8.)

But the Lord did not suffer me to be thus overcome of evil. For though I found many farther interruptions, which discouraged me and unfitted me for prayer rather than led me to the neglect thereof, my heart eagerly caught at every opportunity for it; which I began to think my best-spent time, as therein I confessed and lamented the sins and follies of the other part of my time, implored the mercy of God, bemoaned my wants, and begged for supplies. Herein I had some experience of what Eliphaz said to Job: "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace; thereby shall good come unto thee." (Job xxii. 21.) Surely I found greater good in this exercise than in any other. Sometimes I have found such heart-melting seasons, that the impression has not worn off for a long time. Sometimes my heart and affections have been so raised upwards, that the conclusion has been somewhat like Moses coming down from God on the mount.

And here I must observe, that in the course of this exercise my heart found many enlarged hopes, intermixed with many doubts and fears; for as my enlargements increased, so my comforts abounded, and as they endured, so my confidence grew; but as these subsided, my doubts were strengthened and my queries multiplied. Sometimes, when I found a particular sweetness either in private or public worship, I was led to conclude myself as the spouse of Christ sitting under his shadow with great delight, and finding his fruit sweet unto my taste. (Song ii. 3.) Then again, this was all destroyed, both confidence and comfort, by considering that "Herod did many things, and heard John gladly." (Mark vi. 20.) Then I was ready to doubt and fear, and to call all in question again, even before I had taken comfort; so when my heart was drawn out in prayer with any meltings or enlarged affections, Well, thought I, surely I am one of the Lord's people; surely now it shall be well; surely "the bitterness of death is past." (1 Sam. xv. 32.) And now I began to feel a "joy and peace in believing," (Romans xv. 13,) even believing this to be my case. And this would continue till I was sometimes robbed thereof by a suggestion, that if I was a child of God, such were the Pharisees, for we read, "They made long prayers," (Mark xii. 40,) and consequently they must have experienced the like enlargement.

About this time, 1743, I was asked by a godly Christian, now a minister of Christ,* whether I had ever found an appropriating faith. Indeed, I had thought but little about faith, and was much less acquainted with the other term, appropriating; so answered him, I could not tell what he meant by an appropriating faith. "Why," said he, "I mean a faith whereby you can go to God, and lay hold of him as *your* God, as reconciled to you, or claiming your relation to him as your Father, believing yourself interested in him; can you cry, 'Abba, Father?'" (Gal. iv. 6;) adding, "'That to as many as received him gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name;'" (John i. 12.) To which I made him answer, That sometimes I did believe him to be my God and Father through Christ, and that I was his son; but at other times I could not.

He then asked me, What grounds I had to believe God was my God and Father at any time? I told him, Because I sometimes found such sweetness under the word, as not only drew my mind up to heavenly things, but the affection of my heart was so set upon them, that I seemed to desire nothing besides them. Surely, methought, this was tasting that the Lord is gracious, (1 Peter ii. 3.) which rendered all other enjoyments without God insipid and tasteless; for I have at times been ready to blame the folly, and pity men as befooled with the things of this life, while they are not only strangers to, but also satisfied without, heavenly things; whereas my heart has been ready to say with Asaph, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee?" (Psalm lxxiii. 25.) And sometimes I have found that within me which I take to be the witness of the Spirit, witnessing with my spirit that I am a child of God, (Rom. viii. 16.) and have been constrained to use the words of the prophet, "Doubtless thou art our Father," with this slight variation, Doubtless thou art *my* Father. (Isaiah lxiii. 16.)

He then asked me, What reason I had to believe that this was the Spirit that thus bore witness with mine?

I told him, Because it usually came when I was most seasonably with the Lord, either in private prayer or in public worship. "Well," said he, "and seeing you have this ground to believe God to be your reconciled God and Father at one time, pray what reason have you to doubt of his being so at another?" adding, that "'the gifts and calling of God are without repentance;'" (Rom. xi. 29;) therefore, if God be your reconciled God in covenant to-day, he was so yesterday, and will be so for ever: 'For God is of one mind, and who can turn him?' (Job xxiii. 13;) 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;' (Hebrews xiii. 8;) 'without variableness, or shadow of turning.'" (James i. 17.)

I told him I did not believe or think there was any change in God; but that I found such change in myself, that what I believed at one time I doubted at another, and so had room to fear I was

* Mr. Clark.

mistaken and deceived in what I seemed to believe at any time. To which he made answer, "I know, by the means you have enjoyed, the books you have read, and the ministry you have sat under, you have been too well taught to expect to meet divine acceptance, or to find favour with God, for anything that can be done by you; at least, I know your judgment will not admit of such a supposition, however your spirit may embrace it. Yet methinks I know the rock against which you split; for though you do not expect to be accepted of God for anything that can be done by you, yet you do expect to be accepted of God for what he is pleased by his Spirit to do in you; and in so doing, you are building equally upon the sands. For though what God is pleased to do by his Spirit in us is an evidence of his goodwill towards us, yet do we meet with acceptance from God only on account of what Christ has done for us, and not on account of any thing done in us. For we read, he hath made us 'accepted in the Beloved;' (Eph. i. 6;) and though what God is pleased to do in us is desirable by and comfortable to us, yet is it by no means to be made the foundation of our hope and trust. No, that is too fluctuating and unsteady to be made a foundation: for 'other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.' (1 Cor. iii. 11.) He only is that Rock against which the gates of hell can never prevail; (Matt. xvi. 18;) and, therefore, only fit to build his church upon. Let me," added he, "ask you whether this has not been often the case with you, to think that such and such graces, as humility, love, zeal, meekness, and heavenly-mindedness, such degrees of grace as to avoid sin, at least to the eyes of man, to overcome temptations, to subdue corruptions, at least, not to feel them troublesome, was needful, ere you could think yourself acceptable to God."

This was so exactly the case, that I was obliged to own, that unless I could feel, sensibly feel, those graces, at least one or other of them, present with me, I was ready to think I never had them, nor were they ever in me. Whenever I felt corruptions strong, or was conscious of any evil, I could not dare to approach God, at least, with any confidence or expectation of being heard by him.

"Herein," said he, "it appears to be so hard a task, so difficult a work, to get rid of righteous self:" making use of this observation: "'Sinful self-will sticks as close to us as the shirt to our back; but righteous self-will will stick as close to us as the skin to our flesh.' And herein also is proved the baseness of our hearts, in that we make an idol of and idolize whatever God bestows upon us; admire the gift more than the Giver; yea, trust in received grace more than in the God of all grace. This," said he, "you evidently do, to the dishonour of God and to the hurt of your own soul; at least, to the destruction of those comforts you otherwise might enjoy. Alas!" said he, "we are prone to think, as our sins wear off our forgetful minds, so God forgets them; herein imagining God to be like ourselves; at least, as we forget it, so its guilt seems to lessen, till by and by it is forgotten and gone. But O, when God shall set our iniquities before us, (Psalm l. 21,) we shall find many forgotten

sins brought to our remembrance, and as unpardoned will still stand against us."

I now felt such a convicting power accompanying his word, that it constrained me to own, Verily, so it is, and so it has been with me. Nor can I think I have known any other pardon than the one you speak of; and, consequently, I have known no pardon yet, but all my sins of life, of words, of deeds, of thoughts, and heart, are unforgiven, unblotted out.

"It is certain," replied he, "that there is no forgiveness but in Christ, no pardon but by his blood; for the apostle says, 'In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins;' (Col. i. 14;) and as there is no real pardon given but through the blood of Christ, so there is no true sense of pardon, but by an application of that blood. Wherefore," added he, "you must come to the blood of sprinkling; for he only that is sprinkled therewith can receive the atonement;" (Romans v. 11;) adding, "that as 'Christ was set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins,' (Romans iii. 25,) there is no prohibition, but a divine commission, for you to look unto him who has said, 'Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.'" (Isaiah xlv. 22.)

He continued to press the necessity of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, assuring me that "such shall be saved;" (Acts xvi. 31;) and from the consideration of my past folly, in taking forgetfulness for forgiveness, he urged me to take heed, and not act the same part over again. "Neither," said he, "think of staying till you can mend yourself before you shall dare presume to come to Christ, for that you can never do. If ever you come to Christ, you must come as a sinner, vile as you are. Remember, Christ 'came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' (Matt. ix. 13.) Remember also, Christ 'receiveth sinners, and eateth with them;' (Luke xv. 2;) because 'the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.' (Matt. ix. 12.) Do not think Christ will pronounce it presumption in you to obey the heavenly call; for he says, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' (Matt. xi. 28.) As none can need pardon more than the guilty, so none can need washing more than the filthy; wherefore, then, should you think of staying to put away your guilt, if that were possible, which it is not, and then think of coming to Christ for pardon? or stay till you think you have cleansed yourself, and after that pretend to go to Christ to be washed in his blood? O look to Christ by faith, and you will find he has power to forgive sins, and to 'cleansue us from all unrighteousness.'" (1 John i. 9.)

My heart, like Peter's converts, seemed "gladly to receive the word;" (Acts ii. 41;) and I hope I may venture to say, without vanity, the special kindness of the Lord to me in sending his servant with this message, has some affinity with his kindness to Cornelius in sending Peter to him, to tell him what he ought to do: namely, to "believe on him to whom gave all the prophets witness, that whosoever believeth in him shall receive the remission of sins."

(Acts x. 43.) So did he send this his servant to me with the same message in his mouth; and if I am not wholly ignorant of the work of the Spirit, I then found my soul drawn out to Christ, and more than a willingness to, I felt even a desire to venture my soul into the hands of Christ; yea, if I know anything of the faith of reliance, I was then enabled to act faith on the Lord Jesus Christ. And I must say, I felt, as the effect of believing on him, such joy and peace as I never felt or found before, whilst I admired the suitableness of such a Saviour, the sufficiency of the Saviour, and the graciousness of the Saviour to me, the chief of sinners. My heart was too big with joy and gladness not to find vent in grateful thankfulness; for as "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, (Matt. xii. 34,) so, through the abundant gladness of my heart, I was constrained to bless the Lord, in the language of David, saying, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercy." (Psalm ciii. 1—4.)

And now, like the woman of Samaria, I could no longer conceal what I had met with, but wrote to a young man, a religious acquaintance, to inform him of my joy and rejoicing in the Lord. As I found liberty to draw near, so I had strength to lay hold on Christ, and could say, with feeling propriety, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." (Song ii. 16.)

In this letter I could do little more than call upon my friend to join with me in blessing and praising God. I now no longer wondered at David calling upon all things animate and inanimate to praise the Lord; (Psalm cxlviii;) not only man, as in Psalm cvii., "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men," but the angels also, "who excel in strength, that do his pleasure, praise ye the Lord." (Psalm ciii. 26.) I now seemed to find what our Lord meant by those words, "If these should hold their peace, the very stones would immediately cry out." (Luke xix. 40.) I concluded my letter with calling upon him to join with me in contemplating that which was the source of all my bliss and happiness, I mean the display of divine love in the riches of free grace, through the Mediator, as expressed in the following lines:

Come, and a little let us view
The Saviour's love to me and you,
And to our fallen race,
That he our nature should assume,
And in that nature should become
The maker of our peace.

That he might bring us nigh to God,
He bought us with his own heart's blood,
And gain'd our liberty;
From death and hell, from sin and guilt,
Us to redeem, his blood was spilt,
When hanging on the tree.

Sure, nought but love, and love divine,
 Could move in God the first design
 To set us captives free.
 Nor aught but love in God the Son,
 Which first could move him to become
 Our Head and Surety.

Nor is the Lord the Spirit, then,
 Less moved with love to fallen men,
 Than Father and the Son;
 Because, in equal Deity,
 In Godhead and Divinity,
 These Three are still but One.

O what stupendous love was here,
 For Christ to yield to pay so dear
 To purchase fallen man;
 Who cannot be the better, no,
 For all that man can do, although
 He do the best he can.

O may this one and only Lord,
 For ever be by us ador'd,
 While here we do remain;
 And, when we join the heavenly throng,
 We'll also join them in their song
 Of Moses and the Lamb.

He wrote me in answer, that he perceived I had no sooner tasted of the grapes of the good land than I wanted to be there, requesting my prayers that he might participate with me in my joy.

(To be concluded in our next.)

WITH JOY SHALL YE DRAW WATER OUT OF THE WELLS OF SALVATION.

My dear Friend,—When we parted at A—, you wished me to write to you after my return home; and now more than a month has passed, and yet I have not done so, having put it off from time to time until this morning. Now I have a sorrowful tale to tell you; and if I did not believe that you yourself are subject to the same things by the way, you would not have heard from me at present, nor until I possessed something more cheering to communicate to you.

My soul is full of trouble this morning and weighed down with grief, and I have had to learn by experience through the night the truth of that scripture where David says, "My life is spent with grief and my years with sighing; my strength faileth me because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed." Yet the Lord has not suffered me to pass through the night without some deep heart-searchings and soul-examination; and mixed with many sighs, groans, and cries to the Searcher of hearts. So that my soul, heart, mind, and strength have ascended up to Him who sits upon the mercy-seat, who hath said, "Let the sighing of the prisoner come up before me." And this part of his word has been made a strength and support to my soul through this morning, and is at the present time: "He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

O my dear friend, what should we poor sinners do, were it not for the experience of the saints being left on record—the sorrows of David, the griefs of Job, the faith of Abraham, the wrestlings of Jacob, the sufferings of Paul, the bitter weepings of Peter, the love and zeal of Mary Magdalene, who, the Lord said, had much forgiven her, therefore she loved much? But then the experience of all these put together would not be sufficient support in the day of trouble and the hour of temptation, were it not for the sufferings, agony, groans, sighs, cries, tears, temptations, afflictions, and persecutions of the dear Redeemer, who can be touched with every feeling of our infirmity, who was “tempted in all points like unto us.” How my heart and soul cleave to him in trouble, and when I am overwhelmed with temptations and the power of sin!

O my dear Lord and Saviour, what thou hast gone through for poor sinners, to free them from sin, law, wrath, death, hell, and the grave, and to present them faultless before thy Father in glory! And am not I one among the number of “the remnant according to the election of grace?” Yes, my friend, vile, sinful, wretched I am one among the number. “The election hath obtained it, but the rest were blinded; according as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear unto this day.”

Then, my friend, why I? Why should the Lord have put you and me among the children—put his “fear within our hearts,” planted within us “a good hope through grace,” and revealed divine faith to our souls; so that we might obtain “like precious faith” with Peter and the rest of the redeemed among men? And why are we made mourners in Zion; beggars at Wisdom’s gates; and waiters at the posts of his doors? Why to have Jesus Christ set in our affections, to be bedewed with his grace, fed with his word, blessed by his hand, washed in his blood, covered with his righteousness, saved by his arm, kept by his power, and taught and led by his Spirit; why are we so favoured?

I have truly had a trying path since I saw you, and have had some hard battles to fight, and some sore conflicts and bitter exercises. Sometimes my soul greatly feared that I must fall in the field; for the devil’s temptations were so strong, and my faith so weak, that my soul was ready to faint and give up the ghost. When under these feelings, fears, and exercises, I am afraid that sin and Satan will put an end to my natural life.

The Lord greatly favoured my soul when in Wilts; for the fountain was open, the springs broke up and burst forth, and the streams ran in dry places like a river; the work of the ministry was easy, sweet, and pleasant. His truth flowed, the oil ran, the Lord Jesus was precious, and his service perfect freedom; neither did I feel any chains or fetters, death or bondage in the pulpit.

But O my friend, what have I gone through since my return home! The first Sabbath day I seemed to preach without a heart. I tried to preach out of an exercised heart, but there was no more movement in it than there is in a stone. I seemed to have left my heart behind me; so that there was no scripture which would fit me but this one: “Ephraim also is like a silly dove, without heart.” O how my

soul did pump to try to get down to the water! but the well was deep, and my soul had nothing to draw with. And what was upon the sucker and in the bucket were gone, like my garden pump yesterday; so that I was obliged to get some water and pour in upon the top, to put some water in the bucket and some weight upon the sucker, so that I might draw up water instead of wind.

So, my dear friend, there is no drawing water out of the wells of salvation without a good bucket and sucker, because it is a long way down to the Rock. "And he made them to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock."

I pity those poor blind preachers who only speak from the head and judgment, who only give sound without life, and only bring forth wind instead of water. The Lord said, by the wise man, "Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of water in the streets. Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee." Such speak up through their throat; they mount up to the heavens, they go down again into the depth; their soul is melted because of trouble. These are oxen which are made strong to labour, in whose crib there is some food for the poor and needy, the hungry and thirsty, the desolate and naked; for the guilty and condemned, for the cast down and cast out, and for the lost and ruined. These have their ears open, their eyes anointed, their hearts prepared, and their souls put in a frame to hear, and see, and feel, and receive the truths of the gospel delivered from the ox and the ass's mouth. And "their ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meats."

Dear friend, I trust by this time that you are quite recovered from your illness, and are now looking after the fruits of your late affliction: "For no chastisement for the present is joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." That the Lord may grant you much of his presence, and keep your soul near his feet, is the desire of a poor sinner saved by free grace, eternal mercy, covenant love, pardoning blood, and justifying righteousness.

Yours affectionately,

T. G.

Woburn, May 8, 1850.

OBITUARY OF MISS MARY WESTON, OF HOMERTON.

God in his word sets a special value on the death of the righteous: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." "The memory of the just is blessed." "The righteous perish, and no man layeth it to heart; none considering that he is taken away from the evil to come." They are as a sweet odour ascending to heaven. They are removed in kindest affection. They are described as "not dead, but sleeping." They are classed most lovingly by the blessed Spirit as "the dead in Christ." And in the beatific vision given to John,

they were seen "clad in white raiment, with palms in their hands, and crowns of glory on their heads." Well might the false prophet exclaim, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

I feel these thoughts rest with grateful weight upon my mind in dwelling on the subject of this obituary, one whom I look upon as of "the dead in Christ." And it will be with pleasurable emotions that I shall endeavour to describe, very briefly, her experience to the time of her death.

In the experience of Mary Weston the long-suffering, discriminating, and all-powerful grace of God is singularly manifested. Her state by nature, like that of all men, was all that the word of God declares and our experiences so fearfully corroborate. But in her case some evil points were more than usually developed. And had her salvation not been wholly of the Lord, these alone would have been an insuperable barrier to her renewal of heart. But the Lord bore with her for more than twenty years, singled her out as a vessel of mercy, and by his invincible grace broke her stubborn heart, brought down her proud looks, mollified and subdued her impetuous disposition, revealed Christ in her the Hope of Glory, laid her under his chastening hand, made her as a little child before him, and took her to glory, where she will sing for ever the song of Moses and the Lamb.

Her own language is, "Have I not cause to speak good of his name? But a few years since I gloried in the pleasures of this life—the Lord's day profaned. I rejoiced to mock and make sport of the sacred truth that, through rich grace, I trust I now esteem far more than riches, honour, or mirth, yea, far more than life itself. Language cannot convey what I would wish to render to such a Friend for so great a deliverance." O the wonders of redeeming love! O the power of divine grace!

Our departed friend has left a few papers, taking the form of a diary. She had no intention, however, of their meeting other eyes than her own and those of the members of her family. But from these papers I am permitted to extract a few entries, that will evidence the nature of her experience, and show how she felt at different times during the last three years of her life. These extracts, placed according to their dates, will need no comment. They will speak for themselves. And should the readers of the "Standard" feel as I did on perusing them, they will find no difficulty in considering her as of the "dead in Christ."

The first extract is dated

"*January 1st, 1847.* As I was dressing, the idea occurred, This is the first day of another new year; and I hope I may add, not presumptuously, I have been enabled with a feeling of much freedom to pour out my soul to the Lord, and to beg of him to fill me with praises to him for his wonderful, sparing goodness to one so vile during the past year, and to keep me by his almighty power in this I am about to enter. It is my desire to place my unworthy self entirely in his hands. 'Let him do as seemeth him good,' however

contrary to flesh; only may I be preserved from rebellion, or offending so sparing and kind a Saviour. What a mercy to feel such a great hope as I now do, that ere long I shall be favoured to call upon him without the fear which so often crosses my mind, that I am self-deceived!

"*Lord's day, 3rd.* Arose with indifferent feelings. Went to Zoar with a miserable mind, yet longed to pick up a crumb. Begged of the Lord, if his will, to bless me. Received a little refreshing under the following words, which were introduced in describing the desires, longings, &c., of a seeker: 'If you ever prayed under these impressions, your desires will be granted as sure as there is a God in heaven.' I again felt a great hope that what the minister had described was my case, and for a few moments a confidence arose that ere long I should be satisfied. Went in the evening with lifeless reluctance, yet longed to be more ready to hear. Mr. — showed, towards the close of his discourse, that the earth was without form at the creation, but the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, &c., and it became as a paradise. This again revived me. His Spirit could move upon this body of earth. What a mercy! I will still hope.

"*5th.* Wretched and dead in feeling, fear all the comfortable hope and trust I have for the last fortnight experienced are nothing but delusive fancy, from having lately dwelt more upon these serious truths. I fear, also, I shall prove to all that I am a hypocrite.

"*10th.* Was permitted to attend the Lord's house of worship in the morning; returned without consolation. I so much desired to feel myself to be one of the small ones of whom Mr. — spoke. In the evening, however, I received strength to my hope, from deriving some encouragement that my exercises were traced by a follower of the Saviour; therefore trusted that, amidst all, I should indeed prove a vessel of gracious, long-suffering mercy.

"*14th.* A happy day; had sweet peace and trust, from an assurance by faith in prayer, in which my heart was led with much freedom and nearness to the Lord, that I was blessed indeed.

"*Lord's day, 17th.* 'Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name.' After continual begging and crying, enjoyed the evening of this day, a joy which no man can give or take away. Mr. — introduced, from the same verse of Scripture as the previous Lord's day, some remarks upon the sufferings of Christ; my mind was drawn up in humble hope that I was one of the favoured few for whom he suffered, and I felt at the same time much contrition of spirit for the distinguishing mercy, of which words cannot convey the least idea. 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all his goodness!'

"*18th.* Still rejoicing in hope. The vanities of time and sense at the present moment have no charms for me. The world and my own vile self are all a calm. He can, and does indeed quell the violence of the storm."

"*March 27th.* 'Lord, what is man?' Can my rebellious, ungrateful heart find mercy? Surrounded with blessings, yet nursing ever evil. What pride! So ready to inflict wounds, but how impatient to bear!

If thy gracious will, dear Lord, make me more humble in my walk and conduct."

"*Lord's day, June 6th.* Notwithstanding my worldly-mindedness and undeservings, I still have favour shown me. The long-suffering mercy of the Lord towards me, when so indifferent and full of self, brought me in some measure to cry, with feelings of humility, that he would keep me in thought, word, and action, and that my conduct might be more consistent with his will."

"*15th.* Feeling the afflicting hand of the Almighty upon my tabernacle, I do so desire that, as the outward man decays, the inward may be renewed day by day. O for more sweet communion with my only, never-tiring, never-changing Friend! I feel a sweet resting on his unerring hand."

"*August 6th.* Left home without a collected thought, and concluded that if indeed I was a child of God, I could not have such deadness to divine things; but in the train, when returning home, I really could thank the Lord for his life-giving comfort and enlivening presence to my soul during the day."

"*14th.* In the evening my soul was filled with the peace of which on the previous Sabbath I had only enjoyed a sip. Felt ill in body from over fatigue; but my mind sustained me above it all. Carried the smallest concerns of soul to the Lord, and felt *sure* I did not seek him in vain. In such a sweet frame as this, I long (though I can wait) to leave this sinful clog, and for ever praise *my* dear (yes, I feel sure *he is my*) Saviour. I feel nought but corruption in myself, yet safe through distinguishing mercy. What shall I render to him!

"*15th.* Amidst the concerns and annoyances of earthly pursuits, my struggling spirit soars above, enjoying the sweet harmony which the saints alone can feel. Now I do not stand in too strong a confidence. The present life within seems almost more than my frame can bear. Dearest Lord, do keep, guide, and protect me the remainder of my journey below. May I be an obedient walker; teach me thy ways, and give me faith to walk therein.

"*16th.* The calm is abiding. 'Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty!' is my inward song.

"*17th.* Bless and praise his precious name."

"*23rd.* Was favoured in prayer; entreated the Lord to give me strength to begin a fresh conflict, knowing this sweet rest and halt cannot be expected to last. 'Who ever trusted in me and was confounded?' He has opened, and none can shut; he has gone before and prepared the way, which, though at times rough indeed, is the way to a 'city of habitation.' All things breathing do praise the Lord. May I continue in the things I have learned, knowing, as I now do, of whom I have received them.

"*24th.* All joy, praise, and gratitude! Why was I made to hear thy voice, vile, unworthy, miserable, ungrateful dust as I am? I can stand in his strength against storms and billows below. I think I shall sing the loudest, 'Thanksgiving, glory, and honour to him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb,' for ever and ever."

"*Oct. 9th.* The changes of the past month, within and without, have caused me to wonder 'where the scene will end?' The war between the flesh and the Spirit is continual; yet, though poor and afflicted this morning, I can sing for Jesus my heavenly King."

About this time the affliction of our dear friend took a more decided form. She became confined to her bed; and those who surrounded her despaired of her life. While in this state the Lord favoured her exceedingly. Divine light and joy seemed showered upon her. She rejoiced in Jesus, and spoke rapturously of his love and mercy for hours together. Many ministers and Christian friends visited her, and were delighted witnesses of the Lord's unspeakable goodness to her soul. She called upon them with surprising earnestness to spread abroad his fame, to tell of his redeeming love to his people, and to her soul in particular.

A letter which she wrote to her father some weeks after this, on her partial recovery, will be very appropriate here:

"*March 29th, 1848.* My dear father, * * * I have again every reason to believe that with care I shall yet live to declare, I trust, the goodness of the Lord. From the impression of my mind and the wonderful way in which I was favoured while on a bed of affliction, I had not the least idea that my earthly tabernacle would ever be so far restored. I had such a sweet and glorious prospect of the heavenly rest, that although I wished to be submissive, whether for life or death, I could not help longing to bless and praise him unceasingly who had done so much for me. This sinful body is at times a clog. The precious metal seems to lie in me so hid and surrounded with so much dross, that I tremble to think what furnace-work is yet needed.

"But O what a mercy to hope that, though the mine is corruptible, hard, and filthy, miry earth, requiring sharp digging, there is at the bottom a little pure gold, which can only be brought to view when the Sun of Righteousness purifies and shines within.

"Although, therefore, dear father, I dread renewed conflict, I would not for ten thousand worlds be left without it. I earnestly desire much humility, knowing 'a broken and contrite heart' to be an offering the King of kings will not despise. I desire, also, daily a will given to 'know and do his will;' and want, above all, thankfulness for all that is past and faith to trust for the future. He will do all things well. Is not this ground for comfort? I have indeed been blessed in my affliction; words cannot describe. I have felt my heart burn within me, when talking by the way upon the exalting theme. The Scriptures seem full of love. I read the path of the saints of old, and trace my own. What can we render to the Lord for such unspeakable goodness?"

The next entry we find in the diary of our friend is,

"*April 7th, 1848.* I trust I have had the loving, though afflicting hand of the dear Friend of sinners on my body. O that I could describe the prospect that was unfolded to my view of the glory that is in store, and which I thought I was about to enter for ever. I felt it

“Sweet to look inward, and attend
The whispers of his love,”

and longed to praise him in sounds to mortal ears unknown. Yet I thought I could wait the Lord's will submissively; but now that I am exercised by him, the enemy suggesting to me that I am a base hypocrite, I feel that I need more patience; for although I cannot entirely give up the favour so great, I would desire, also, not to murmur and look on the dark side so much.”

“*May 2nd.* Brought this day to feel the Lord is daily blessing me by daily afflicting me, and am thankful he so favours me.”

“*22nd.* Burdened, dejected, and every way cast down. Like the tides, I ebb and flow. Sometimes I have such strong confidence that I almost can say, I never surely shall be moved; I take a retrospective view of the Lord's gracious and tender care of me from the cradle to the present time, and when I see how every trial, every fleshly cross, cutting off arms and plucking out eyes, has been so necessary to force me to look and cry for comfort, love, and consolation to him alone, I have said, I am highly favoured; but, alas! another sun has scarcely risen, perhaps, ere all is in commotion. I have very little cessation of bodily pain; no one seems so kept down as I in this way. Friends unceasingly tender are miserable comforters. The word is a blank; prayer a few constrained breathings, and more from the fear of additional weights than love to the dear Lord. I long to be rid of this fleshly body, not as in my illness, or, rather, I should say, when I thought I was going to praise the long-suffering Redeemer for ever; but because I do not like to carry the daily cross of affliction and indwelling storms. The Beloved has withdrawn; I am indeed alone! O may I never rest until he again appear! And do, dear Lord, if every other desire be withholden, do grant me patience and submission to thy will, however trying; if thy will to keep me much in solitude, O do grant that my whole desire may be to hold communion with thee!

“*24th.* A day of excruciating pain, and not a feeling evidence of being a follower of him who sweat great drops of blood for wretched sinners. Could only breathe out, Lord, give me submission. I have much trembling concerning the final conflict.”

“*Sept. 5th.* After a season of much drought, I am again favoured with a refreshing; have been very negligent in soliciting that support which is so needful to help me on the way. Often hope is very low. The inward enemies are strong in opposition; but once in Christ, O the mercy! and though old nature is ever striving and the carnal mind so at enmity, yet, bless his dear name, ‘the righteous shall hold on his way.’ O for a closer walk with God, less conformity to and more separation from a world lying in sin!

“*7th.* Enjoyed a sweet, refreshing communion with an old disciple of him whom my soul loves.

“*8th.* Peace the inmate of my soul.

“*9th.* Still favoured with nearness. Would not grieve the blessed Spirit by vain and foolish conversation; but am too prone to wander.

“*10th, 11th, and 12th.* My God reigns; am happy; all is well!

The glorious prospect laid up is indeed a stimulant to refresh and cheer travellers here; the sweetness of looking beyond, none but the redeemed can have the most distant conception of.

“16th. I desire

“‘A closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame.’

When my Beloved has withdrawn, I am sad.

“‘Kindle, dear Lord, the flame
Of never-dying love.’

Draw, and I will run.”

“22nd. Was baptized; felt depressed from illness of body, occasioned in some degree by the exercise of my mind. As I did not enjoy the enlivening presence of the dear Jesus, the enemy harassed me. The water was nothing to my soul. I wanted to see him whom I professed to follow in it. While at the pool a solemn feeling came over me, and this thought: I am truly blessed to be enabled to desire and crave to lead a new life, buried with my dear Saviour in suffering, and a longing again that I might soon be buried from earth and reign with him for ever. I must cross the Jordan, ere I reach the church above.

“29th. Full of perplexity; the way is too narrow for mortal knowledge.”

“November 2nd. Am favoured to give myself to the all-wise God.”

“5th. At peace, though not exalted.

“6th. Can draw near the dear Lord; thus all goes on comfortably.”

“20th. My soul has been, until the last hour, from eleven till twelve o'clock, exceeding sorrowful. Last evening I was so oppressed, my hope even seemed departed. These words crossed my mind: “If possible, let this cup pass.” I was compelled to feel, “but not my will.” I trust I may not be left to final despair. The opinions of ministers, and, in fact, my own also, rack my mind. One contends for this, and another that. May I, like the woman in the precious Book of Truth, press through the crowd, and one touch of his garment, which partakes of sovereign virtue, will cleanse from all.

“Mr. — dropped these words in his sermon, last evening, when speaking of the one faith: ‘As true as the earnest is given,’ which is faith, I felt that so sure would be the fulfilment; if, therefore, my prospect of eternal bliss came from eternity, which was attended with such life-giving power, I cannot give up. The present useful trial is only of this faith; and though he tarry, I shall shortly rise to endless bliss. Cheer up, my soul, and every cast-down wanderer: though hedged behind, before, and on either side, with a hedge of sharp briars, he will perform his word. Yea, though legions of devils oppose, thou shalt conquer.”

“December 1st. A gradual withdrawing of the best of friends. Again I begin to shake; cannot walk upon the water.”

“January 31st, 1849. Heard Mr. — from ‘The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord;’ and I am again blessed to prove that he saves from sin, the curse, and the law, which but so lately threatened my final destruction. My heart is deceitful above all things, and not to

be trusted, as I so continually live to prove. Then if I be saved, it will not be by any power of my own; and I shall assuredly sing, as Mr. — said, ‘Salvation is of the Lord, here and hereafter.’”

“*February 11th.* I trust I can with a good hope say, I know something of this deliverance; powers of darkness I have felt indeed, but the sweet translation into the kingdom of his dear Son is such a change, that sometimes, though painful, I would not be without the one, that I may experience the other. No redemption, I can say, but in him. He paid the penalty; all that justice requires he accomplished.”

“*21st.* Had a little of that rest which remains to the children of God, while conversing of his coming to them.”

“*28th.* Very, very happy in anticipation of Jesus coming to receive me to himself. His time is now mine, and it is the best.

“‘The Lord will soon his chariot send,
And fetch me home to joy and peace;
Then farewell world and farewell sin,
And farewell self and nature, too;
No more to feel the plague within,
Nor pains, nor troubles know.’”

The diary of our friend terminates here. From this time to her death she was continually on the decline. All interest in the things of this life ceased. Her mind became more and more diseased. Her body declined in strength almost daily. Depression and despondency prevailed with her for many months; and she dwelt much on the depravity of her nature and felt deeply her unworthiness. She would repel all attempts to encourage her to hope; and felt even her food to be so much more than she deserved, that at times she was disinclined to take it. Even the most depraved characters seemed more enviable than herself; and, referring to a very dissolute woman who came under her observation, she remarked, “There is hope even of her, but none for me.”

This state of mind continued long. She appeared all but in despair. But some weeks before she died, the Lord appeared to her in mercy once more. Her heart was melted, and she was again blessed with a sweet hope in the Lord Jesus.

The result of this visit of her Saviour was a spirit of submission; she again became as a little child, and seemed to wish only to depart, which was far better. Little enjoyment was manifested. Her bodily weakness was extreme; but much of her time was spent in prayer.

On the Friday before her death, (June 14,) she appeared to be more than usually prayerful; but made no particular remarks on any subject.

On the Monday following, (June 17, 1850,) the only change in her was, that she seemed weaker than ever; and, gradually declining all the morning, about the middle of the day, without a struggle or groan, her spirit left this tabernacle of clay, to be clothed upon with her house above, where mortality is swallowed up of life.

London, June, 1850.

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 a 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. 10.

No. 180. DECEMBER, 1850. VOL. XVI.

ISRAEL'S HAPPINESS.

“Happy art thou, O Israel!”—Deut. xxxiii. 39.

Israel was a name given to Jacob by his covenant God under peculiar circumstances. I envy not the state of those who can professedly and deliberately cashier the sovereignty of God in the affairs of men. Isaac had two sons; Esau and Jacob; and when in the womb of Rebecca, before they were born or had any reasonable powers to know good or evil, or what the spirit of contention meant, they struggled together within her. Rebecca felt it strange so much so that it is said she went to inquire of the Lord. In the early ages of the world, it appears that the Lord in some particular way familiarly conversed with the objects of his love; and in reference to Rebecca's inquiry, he tells her, two nations were in her womb, and two manner of people should be separated from her bowels; that one people should be stronger than the other people, and the elder should serve the younger. The children were born, and grew up into life, Jacob a plain man dwelling in tents, and Esau a cunning hunter. A plain, simple, and affecting narrative the Scripture unfolds, and the Lord God in after ages of the world acted upon it. Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his venison, but Rebecca loved Jacob. Thus Isaac's love to Esau would seem to rise from carnal motives. Whether Rebecca had a presentiment of affection towards Jacob, in preference to Esau, from the revelation God made unto her, is not for me to determine. However, on a certain occasion Esau returned from his hunting faint and weary, and exhausted with toil; meets with his brother Jacob making pottage, and asks for a portion of it. Jacob refuses, except upon the condition that he will sell him his birthright. A strange

mysterious request, especially at such a juncture, the weakness and faintness of Esau for want of food! Esau reasons with himself, and says, I am at the point to die, and what good will this birthright do to me? Jacob makes him swear he will sell it him, and then gives him to eat. Thus Esau, we are told, despised his birthright. What the privilege and blessing of the birthright was may be seen in the blessing wherewith Isaac blessed Jacob, when he stole the blessing, as he did, by the help of his mother. The plain, simple tale is solemn and mysterious; and when Isaac found out the deception which had been practised upon him, though Isaac trembled very exceedingly when he found it out, yet he was so persuaded that the blessing must be Jacob's. (which doubtless arose from the love and power of God upon his heart whilst he pronounced the blessing upon Jacob,) that he emphatically tells Esau, "Yea, and he shall be blessed." God's judgments are a great deep. His way is in the sea, his paths in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known. It is true, the conduct of Rebecca and Jacob in this matter entailed upon them a world of trouble, but it never moved God to take away the blessing from Jacob to give it to Esau. No, never. And the God of Jacob again and again, in after times, repeatedly confirmed the blessing upon Jacob, though he chastised him. Upwards of twenty years after this event, and after passing through much trouble and affliction in the service of Laban, and of a kind too he had practised towards Esau his brother; first in reference to Rachel, and then in changing his wages no less than ten times, so that living with Laban longer seemed insupportable—at this juncture, Jacob's God said to him, "Return to the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee." These were timely words to afflicted Jacob—nor was he long before he set about the matter. The Lord who commanded his departure, preserved him from Laban's wrath in his pursuit, by warning him in a dream to take heed that he spoke not to Jacob good or bad. This admonition Laban was obliged to obey; and Jacob in his defence sharply reproves Laban for the spirit in which he pursued him. "For," says Jacob, "except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen my affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight. Blessed are they whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance."

As Jacob journeyed back to the land of his fathers and to his kindred, the angels of God met him. Jacob saw them and said, "This is God's host;" or, as the margin renders the reading, "Two hosts or camps of angels;" significant of his safe convoy, protection, and defence from harm. "Are they not all ministering spirits," saith the apostle, "sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Poor creatures that we are, we see through a glass darkly in everything here below. But comfortless as we sometimes feel, and disconsolate too, we have a heavenly guard, though invisible, and the Lord of angels too, or all would soon be over with us as to hope or help. But when this corruptible shall put on incor-

ruption, and this mortal immortality, we shall see with clearer eyes than we can now, what our state as fallen creatures was, what our salvation has been, and the tender solicitude of our covenant God towards us as his children, all our journey through the wilderness, notwithstanding the heaviness we have often had on account of his dealings towards us. Then we shall love him for ever, with a pure heart fervently, free from sin and the thousand disquietudes arising from it, which, while we are in this tabernacle, makes us groan being burdened. And however poor Jacob, for a few moments of time, may have felt encouragement on his journey in the prospect of meeting his brother Esau, yet his heart sank within him, when the messengers returned to Jacob with the tidings, "Esau is coming to meet thee, and four hundred men with him."

And do not the Lord's people in the present day know something of the heart-faintings of Jacob? I believe they do, such as are circumscribed in heart. "If we are without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, we are bastards and not sons." The child of God cannot go on without trouble; but his Lord sanctifies it unto him. The earth has all kinds of rough and stormy weather—hail, rain, frost, and snow, as well as the genial beams and fructifying warmth of the sun, to make it fruitful. So spiritually with the believer. It takes a great deal of the power of God to make our hard hearts tender, and, when made so, to keep them so. Therefore we are repeatedly brought into such straits as to feel that no created power can help us, all the world is a blank unto us, possess what we may, or want what we may, so that from sheer necessity our prayer is a prayer of necessity. The Lord in love, with power, in answer to prayer, appears to our comfort; and we see and feel more of the sweetness of his grace, his faithfulness to his people in his beloved Son, and our security there, than ever we saw before. Here we are not alone, for one of old who trod in the same steps, though a king, could sing, "Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit;" and adds, as though it were more than once repeated, "So wilt thou recover me, and make me to live." But I must return to Jacob.

As soon as the messengers returned, and brought him word that Esau his brother was on his way to meet him with four hundred men, we read that Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed. His heart felt as though certain death was at hand to himself and all that he had. All his past relief, assurance, encouragement, comfort, and support, seemed now to fail. Prayer, prayer alone, and the faithfulness of his God, were all he could have recourse to for fresh supplies. Urgent, stern necessity suggested and compelled his cry. In the meantime, he used all the foresight and precaution he knew of to meet the event, and to appease the expected wrath and vengeful retaliation of his brother for what he had done to him twenty years ago. And having sent over the ford Jabbok his wife, and children, and cattle, and all that he had, Jacob that night was left alone. But we are told there wrestled a man with him, under the covert of the night, to the dawning of the day. What a mystery! And Jacob's thigh was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. But, as the day dawned, the man

who had wrestled with him said, "Let me go, for the day breaketh." Jacob exclaimed, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." And hence followed the change in Jacob's name. "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

What a mystery this narrative! And, O my soul, what power in prayer when God gives it! Who can tell what Jacob felt in this struggle? And who can tell the love God bore to Jacob, when he enabled him to hold his God so fast? What a profound deep! Language is too poor to tell Jacob's distress of soul on the one hand, and of the love and favour of God to him on the other. It is in this way God brings succour, deliverance, and joy, to a troubled soul; he first wounds, in other words, brings the soul into such a wilderness condition, that all created power sensibly fails—he is compelled to go to his God in prayer, and to wrestle too, for here alone help can be found. The sequel proves, that the eternal God is his refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

There are a few words quoted above I would a moment or two longer dwell upon. They are these: "And Jacob was left alone, and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." Here Jacob was alone; he had sent away his wives and children, servants and cattle, and all that he had; they could render him neither help nor comfort in his present trying situation; on the contrary, they were a burden and distress. And I believe every real child of God has the very same path to tread, more or less; all created good, and all earthly ties, however near and dear, are many a time to the believer vanity and vexation of spirit. His cry to his God in spirit often is, "Dear Lord, suffer not my heart and affections to be carried away on any earthly good! All is nothing without thee! Vanity of vanities, all is vanity! Yet bless me with wisdom to direct my steps in all things I have to pass through and attend unto; for without thee I can do nothing, nothing but dishonour thee and make myself miserable!" But this wrestling took place in the night, when all was dark round about; so that Jacob could not see what he was about, nor with whom he was wrestling. And if we think of wrestling as it really is, there is a great deal of struggling, and muscular exertion and power put forth to maintain ground one against the other, until superior tact or strength shall overcome the adversary. And when, I would ask, does the Christian most earnestly struggle in prayer but from necessity? When but, from a feeling sense of his lonely state, he needs help and comfort in nights of desertion or of trouble, or some other casualty? It proves such a night, too, with us sometimes, on whatever hand or to whatever quarter we look of an earthly nature, that in the distress of our souls we say of everything under the sun, "Miserable comforters are ye all, and physicians of no value!" "O that I had the wings of a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest!" Such nights as these make us struggle and wrestle with our God in secret prayer for comfort and relief. And O what a precious Lord we feel we have in answer to our poor prayers, though they be so broken and disjointed as we are sure no earthly friend

could listen to! But when the Lord sweetly gives us comfort and peace, we know it comes from him; we know he is our peace; we know his humility and condescension towards us is what angels and men could never stoop to. He then makes everything sweetly solemn and peaceful in the soul; and when we consider that this glorious God in our nature is the very bridegroom of our souls, and can take in for a moment or two all that is recorded of him in such a scripture as this: "Thy Maker is thy husband," and can meditate not only on what is left upon record in precious promises to prove it, but that we feel we are interested in it; then all earthly good quits its hold, and evil has for the moment lost its power to plague the soul, and it enters into the meaning of the words, "For I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." (2 Cor. xi. 2.)

We can say, believer, but little on these matters at the best. You know they are better felt than spoken or written about. But we read that the day broke, when the mysterious man who wrestled with Jacob asked him to let him go. Mysterious love! To ask Jacob, a worm, to let him go! Jacob was, as to physical strength, as nothing in the hands of him with whom he was wrestling; yea, less than nothing, if that can be, for he was not only the man Christ Jesus, but the Lord God Almighty. O how could it be, that he could love us so? I cannot, cannot tell, but that so it seemed good in his sight. Ah! and the crowning blessing of all is, "Having loved his own which are in the world, he loveth them unto the end." (John xiii. 1.) But as the day broke, it was significant that Jacob was about to obtain all he could wish; and so he did, for, as he prevailed with God and with man, he obtained from the love and power of God all he needed to meet his brother. For I really cannot see with what intent Esau left his home, and four hundred men with him, except from a determination to extirpate Jacob and all that he had; and that appears to be Jacob's view of it too. When, lo! on the contrary, God, in answer to Jacob's struggling with the angel in Bethel, turns the murderous heart of Esau to nothing but love and tenderness when they met together. "He ran to meet Jacob to embrace him, and he fell on his neck and kissed him; and they mutually wept together." As saith one of the lesser prophets of Jacob, "He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God. Yea, he had power over the angel and prevailed; he wept and made supplication unto him; he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us, even the Lord God of hosts; the Lord is his memorial." (Hosea xii. 2—5.) "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities, and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." (Micah vii. 18, 19.) Have we not good ground, then, to say, "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency; and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

EXTRACT FROM DR. OWEN'S SERMON,
PREACHED BEFORE PARLIAMENT, APRIL 29, 1640.

No men in the world want help like them that want the gospel. Of all distresses, want of the gospel cries loudest for relief. A man may want liberty and yet be happy, as Joseph was; a man may want peace and yet be happy, as David was; a man may want children and yet be happy, as Job was: a man may want plenty and yet be full of comfort, as Micaiah was: but he that wants the gospel, wants everything that should do him good. A throne, without the gospel, is but the devil's dungeon: wealth, without the gospel, is fuel for hell: advancement, without the gospel, is but going high to have the greater fall. What do men need that want the gospel? They want Jesus Christ, for he is revealed only by the gospel. He is all in all, and where he is wanting there can be no good. Hunger cannot truly be satisfied without manna, the bread of life, which is Jesus Christ: and what shall a hungry man do that hath no bread? Thirst cannot be quenched without that living spring, which is Jesus Christ: and what shall a thirsty soul do without water? A captive, as we are all, cannot be delivered without redemption, which is Jesus Christ; and what shall the prisoner do without his ransom? Fools, as we are all, cannot be instructed without wisdom, which is Jesus Christ: without him we perish in our folly. All building without him is on the sand, which will surely fall. All working without him is in the fire, where it will be consumed. All riches without him have wings, and will fly away. A dungeon with Christ is a throne, and a throne without Christ is hell. Nothing so ill but Christ will compensate. All mercies without Christ are bitter, and every cup is sweet that is seasoned but with a drop of his blood. He truly is the love and delight of the sons of men, without whom they must perish eternally, for there is no other name given unto them whereby they may be saved. He is the Way; men without him are Cains, wanderers and vagabonds. He is the Truth; men without him are liars, like the devil, who was so of old. He is the Life; men without him are dead, dead in trespasses and sins. He is the Light; men without him are in darkness, and go they know not whither. He is the Vine; those that are not grafted in him are carried away with a flood. He is Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; the Author and the Sender, the Founder and Finisher of our salvation; he that hath not Him, hath neither beginning of good nor shall have an end of misery. O blessed Jesus, how much better were it not to be, than to be without thee!—never to be born than not to die in thee! A thousand hells come short of this—eternally to want Jesus, as men do that want the gospel.

They want all holy communion with God, wherein the only happiness of the soul doth consist. He is the life, light, and joy, and blessedness of the soul: without him, the soul in the body is a dead soul in a living sepulchre. It is true, there be many that say, "Who will show us any good?" but, unless the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon us, we perish for evermore. You who

have tasted how gracious the Lord is, who have had any converse or communion with him in the issues and goings forth of his grace, those delights of his soul with the children of men, would not life itself, with a confluence of all earthly endearments, be a hell without him? Is it not the daily language of your hearts, Whom have we in heaven but thee? and on earth there is nothing in comparison of thee? The soul of man is of a vast and boundless comprehension; so that, if all created good were centred into one enjoyment, and that bestowed on one soul, because it must needs be finite and limited, as created, it would give no solid contentment to his affections or satisfaction to his desires. In the presence and fruition of God alone there is joy for evermore; at his right hand are rivers of pleasure, the well-springs of life and blessedness. Now, if to be without communion with God in this life, wherein the soul hath so many avocations from the contemplation of its own misery, (for earthly things are nothing else,) is so insupportable a calamity, ah! what shall that poor soul do that must want him for eternity, as all they must do who want the gospel? They want all the ordinances of God, the joy of our hearts and comfort of our souls. O the sweetness of a sabbath! the heavenly raptures of prayer! O the glorious communion of saints, which such men are deprived of! They will at last want heaven and salvation. They shall never come to the presence of God in glory; never inhabit a glorious mansion. They shall never behold Jesus Christ, but when they shall call for rocks and mountains to fall on them, to hide them from his presence. They shall want light in utter darkness; want life under the second death; want refreshment in the midst of flames; want healing under gnawing of conscience; want grace, continuing to blaspheme; want glory, in full misery; and, which is the sum of all, they shall want an end of all this, for "their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched."

[~~What~~ days were those, when Owen could preach, and the assembled Houses of Parliament could listen to language so plain, nervous, decided, and scriptural!!]

EXPERIENCE OF WILLIAM HARLEY.

(*Concluded from page 387.*)

I continued in this comfortable frame for three days, when these thoughts put an end to it: "Surely my joy is but that of the hypocrite, which will perish; for I did not receive my comfort from God, but from man. I am only pleasing myself with what the creature said, who may be mistaken; but if he be not mistaken, what right have I to those blessings? God never sealed them to me. I had no application of them; no evidence they were mine. I had no word, no promise of God applied by the Spirit unto my soul. I am, therefore, only catching at what does not belong to me."

These thoughts damped my present joy, but quickened me to a fresh calling upon God, in more earnest supplication that he would be pleased to seal me by his Spirit of promise, in some special application of his word unto my soul. Accordingly, while I was at prayer,

the Lord was graciously pleased to speak unto my soul in these words: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa. i. 18.) O how did my heart leap into my former joyful frame, yea, into more exalted joy and gladness, when in these words I received so special an application of pardon, not only "that there is forgiveness with God, that he may be feared," (Psalm cxxx. 4,) but my soul received a satisfactory persuasion that *my* sins in particular were forgiven; which was so much the greater mercy and blessing, as I received it in answer to prayer, which was now turned into praise and admiration of God's discriminating goodness to my soul, so that my heart went out unto God in the language of David, "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto. And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God?" (2 Sam. vii. 18, 19.) Then these words were given me from the Lord: "I will take you one of a city and two of a family, and will bring you to Zion." (Jeremiah iii. 14.) Blessed Lord, said my soul, if so few, why am I one of that number? Why me, O Lord, why me? when these words sounded in my heart as an answer from the Lord: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee;" (Jeremiah xxxi. 3;) "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you." (Jeremiah iii. 14.)

If ever I knew what it was to commune with God, I did at this time; and, not to use the extravagant flights that some have on similar occasions, comparing it with Paul's visions and revelations, as not knowing "whether in the body or out of the body," I think I may venture to say, my soul was in a very desirable frame. I am sure the remembrance of it makes me to say, "It is good to be here." (Matt. xvii. 4.) "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle." (Job xxix. 2—4.) And if any thing will make the tongue like the pen of a ready writer, the overflowing of Divine love will.

I now found so great a change in my soul, as in many things seemed to accord with the apostle's description of a man in Christ, the passing away of old things, and all things becoming new. (2 Cor. v. 17.) Believing myself interested in the Lord's salvation, not merely from these testimonies, but from their effects in me, for I found my guilt removed and my soul delivered from slavish fear, I no longer looked upon God as angry with me, but as reconciled to me; not as my enemy, but a friend, my best friend, "a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." (Prov. xviii. 24.) I no longer felt the accusations of conscience, nor did I tremble when I read or heard God's threatenings against the wicked, as heretofore, when I expected them to be executed against me, not from any thought that I had not deserved them; no, but because I found the Lord as a pavilion to hide me from them. Surely, in my measure, I experienced Christ to be

"an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest." (Isaiah xxxii. 2.)

Being delivered from condemnation, and acquitted before God, or, as the apostle terms it, "being justified by faith," I had peace with God; a peace which, till then, I had been a stranger to, because it was a peace enjoyed as God's gift, and flowed into my soul like a river. When I considered it was the work of Christ, the obedience and suffering of Christ, that made this peace, "And having made peace through the blood of his cross, (Col. i. 20,) I was now ready to say with David, "In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong." (Psalm xxx. 6, 7.) But O, I soon found that my strength was weakness; as I now expect I ever shall do, when I am not "strong in the Lord and the power of his might." (Ephes. vi. 10.) When we trust more in grace received than to the strength there is in God, we may reverse the apostle's words, and instead of reading, "When I am weak, then am I strong;" (2 Cor. xii. 10;) we may read, When I am strong, then am I weak; that is, when we are so strong in ourselves, though it be in grace, as grace received, as to neglect our support, I mean a constant trust in the Lord, or a daily living by faith on the Son of God, then are we weak, as my experience proved.

I must here notice, that among the number of old things that passed away from me, the matter of my petitions in prayer seemed altered, and so changed as to become new unto me. Formerly I used to pray to be delivered from sin, and for mercy to pardon my sin, chiefly inquiring what I should do to be saved. (Acts xvi. 30.) But now, as the apostle speaks in another place, "What a man hath, why doth he yet hope for." (Romans viii. 24.) So, having a feeling sense of pardon in my soul, I thought I had no need of praying for that I already had, under the divine influence of which my corruptions seemed so subdued, as though they had been entirely rooted out of me. And herein appears my weakness, when I thought myself strong. Because I did not just then feel the workings of corrupt nature, I neglected watching over it; as though there had been no evil corruptions remaining within me. Not that in my judgment I thought they were not there; for I had before this frequently opposed Mr. Wesley's notion of sinless perfection, while we are in the body; yet I did so neglect them as neither to watch over them nor to pray against them, as though they had been so slain as never to rise or molest me any more. But alas! I soon found they were not only there, but my evil heart had also betrayed me into evil before I was aware or sensible thereof.

Before, my inquiry was, "What shall I do to be saved?" But now I found the inquiry of the apostle much on my heart, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts ix. 6;) meaning whereby I should glorify God, working that which is "well pleasing in his sight." (1 John iii. 22.)

One day, as I made use of these words in prayer: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Teach me what is thy whole mind and will in Jesus Christ concerning me," (1 Thess. v. 18,) I had these words as an answer immediately returned: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." (1 Thess. iv. 3.) I do not know that in all my

life I ever received so immediate and direct, or more manifest answer to prayer. Having begged to know the mind and will of God, I was herein told it: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification;" which was so suitable in the season and nature of it, that nothing could be more suitable and seasonable to the desire and state of my soul. For having received a sense of pardon, I did not need an assurance of that nature: or, in other words, being justified or acquitted from guilt, I was delivered from the fear of wrath, and thought I only needed to be "sanctified and made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light;" (Col. i. 12;) which I thought was then promised and insured to me, in its being his will to sanctify me: "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification."

But O how soon did Satan suggest, and my evil heart join the suggestion. If the will of God be thy sanctification, what needs such anxiety on thy part? God will take care of his own work, without your thoughtfulness. "Why, that is true," thought I. "The will of the Lord shall be done: 'For the counsel of the Lord shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure.' (Isaiah xli. 10.) Moreover," thought I, "'Who, by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature?' (Matt. vi. 27.) I can do nothing to forward it; it is God's work, and I may leave it to him. He will take care of his own work; he has said it, he also will do it." The consequence of which was, immediate deadness in my soul. My joy subsided; but I thought I must not always expect to be upon the mount. I soon found my corruptions revive; but so long as I was kept from actual transgression all was well, and it was no more than what was found in other good men. Paul found "a law in his members warring against the law of his mind;" (Romans vii. 23;) and David says, "Mine enemies are lively, and they are strong." (Psalm xxxviii. 19.)

But I soon also found temptations to actual sin; yet because it was secret evil, and consequently not likely to bring reproach upon religion, to palliate the matter, I found my heart ready to say, "Is it not a little one, and my soul shall live?" (Genesis xix. 20.)

Thus, by woeful experience, I became acquainted with Satan's devices, who, to bring us to evil, endeavours to make us indifferent to that which is good, and by artful gradations leads us step by step from one sin to another, till at length I was brought to be almost as insensible to sin as I was before my awakening. It is true, I had the form of religion, nor did I "walk in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful;" (Psalm i. 1;) I was kept "unspotted from the world," but was far from "hating the garment spotted with the flesh." (Jude 23.)

But God was pleased to recover me from this backsliding by a dream, or what I think I may call "a vision of the night;" for I thought, in my sleep, I was lying down on a two-planked bridge, which reached across a narrow, but very deep, dismal, and dreadful gulf; in a word, no other than the bottomless pit; when I was aroused with these words: "Awake, O man, thou sleepest over the gulf of destruction." I also thought in my dream, that I arose up in a fright to hasten off the bridge, which seemed to have a rail on each side to

prevent passengers from falling into the pit; but before I could get off the bridge, I thought Satan laid hold of my right hand and strove to pull me in, telling me, that though drowning persons are said to rise three times, it is not so with those who are drowning in perdition, but that if he once got me in, I should never rise more. I now seemed to be struggling with this prince of darkness, and seemed to tremble for fear of his being too strong for me; till of a sudden I felt something clasp hold of my left wrist, when I turned and saw a hand only, folded in a cloud; upon which my fears vanished, and Satan, after two or three more pulls at me, let go his hold and fell backward into the gulf, and I saw him no more. When I awoke out of sleep, surely I may say, "then did the Lord open my understanding, and seal my instruction;" (Job xxxiii. 16;) for, ruminating on my dream, the Lord showed me that the condition I was fallen into was as dangerous to rest in as that I apprehended in my dream; that as Satan seized upon me in my dream, so had he beset, yea, really taken hold on me as his captive; and, as my preservation in my dream was owing to the hand that held me, so I saw that nothing prevented my immediate destruction but my being in the hands of Christ; when these words dropped upon my mind: "Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (John x. 28.) O how did my heart leap at the reception of these words, and as in my dream I was glad to be rid of such an adversary, I was now more glad to be possessed of such "a friend, that sticketh closer than a brother," who, though I had been so ungrateful as to depart from him and yield to sin against him, such was his unchanging love, and grace, and never-failing mercy, that he did not, would not suffer me to perish.

And now did I find the Lord more precious to me than ever: now did I "loathe myself, and abhor myself" because of my sin against so good a God: and now was I quickened to a fresh calling upon and following after God, who was pleased to heal my backsliding, and restore me to the joys and comforts of his salvation. And thus have I gone on ever since, sometimes walking with God, sometimes turning aside from him, sometimes mourning and sometimes rejoicing; and, "having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day." (Acts xxvi. 22.)

THROUGH MUCH TRIBULATION, WE MUST ENTER THE KINGDOM.

Much esteemed Friend in the Lord,—It is time I answered your note, containing the request of a few people who wish me to come and preach the word of life unto them. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." I rather feel my way than see it. I am willing to serve them.

My capital theme is the cross, when I can get at it and under it. A broken heart and Christ crucified will unite at the "set time to favour Zion." Honesty becomes me. I am a man of high doctrinal

sentiment; but not a clamorous one. In design I endeavour to keep pace with the blind and the lame, groan with the prisoner, and sigh with the needy. If the excellency of Israel fill the earthen pitcher, the Lord will pour them out a blessing in answer to prayer: "If we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us." If this statement meet the approbation of the people, with your leave, God willing, Mr. G. may send a conveyance for me on Thursday, 6th July, to preach in the evening.

I am sorry to learn that you are still suffering to such an extent. "How unsearchable are the Lord's judgments, and his ways past finding out!" but how certain that word, It is through many trials, and "through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom!" God the Father put his Son to grief, and "he learned obedience by the things which he suffered;" and having suffered, "he knoweth how," and is best able to sympathize with his sufferers. He is "a brother born for adversity." A suffering path is the highway to his bosom. Love is most sensitive. It is his own love that constrains him, fetches him down into the deeps of appalling gulphs, where the heart turns sick and the soul faint, and the bowels boil with affliction; when a thought passing through the mind acts upon the nervous system like the electric fluid upon wire, and sets all in a tremulous motion: brains and bowels appear sore; and "a wounded spirit who can bear?" Cries, and tears, and holy waitings help the soul through the deeps. Faith in God is never disappointed in the end; the Lord owns it, and says, "It is my people."

Christ and his mercy are prized in proportion to our misery. O the value of Christ to a lost sinner! His looks, his tokens of favour, his visits and his abidings, his word, his mind, his Spirit, his cross, his sceptre, his kingdom of grace. How important to know him! "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee." "He saved them for his name's sake." This name is worthy of all trust and honour, in all states and under all circumstances, by the sons of Abraham. I am often as stupid as an ass, an almost senseless block; stripped and emptied; alone in the dark; my way hid; experience past all buried. I think sometimes I shall lose my senses, my life: and sometimes fear I shall lose my soul. Winds and waves toss me about; but I always get help in the end. I want to be experimentally one with Jesus, and walk with him by the moment. All is a blank, loss, and shadow in this desert land but Jesus. Had I a sober mind I should be awake to the important, all-important, "one thing needful," and that is Jesus. The fair bosom of Jesus is best tried at the midnight hour; shines brightest in dark valleys, when he comes forth to unbosom himself in the deep sorrows of the daughter of Zion. "He cannot deny himself." The Lord be your "Good Physician."

Be pleased to excuse all this blind, hard-hearted stuff. I often "darken counsel by words without knowledge." Farewell, with love in Jesus.

R. I.

AN ORIGINAL LETTER FROM THE LATE JOHN KENT.

Dear respected Friend,—Mercy and peace be multiplied! Your kind favours I have received; and they have laid me under that obligation which I have no words to express. My wife and family also beg to acknowledge with feelings of gratitude their obligations to you.

We have never had a sight of each other in the flesh, and perhaps we never shall till, with the hundred and forty and four thousand, we meet in the “general assembly and church of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven.”

I am still living to praise Him who hath remembered me in my low estate in the Adam-fall transgression—a state of alienation, enmity, and death. Seventy and two years I have been the subject of his innumerable mercies; they have been more in number than the hairs of my head, and far, very far, outrun my minutes. “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.” He has brought me up once more from a bed of sickness and extreme pain. He has spoken to me from the chambers of the tomb, by his word, and by his Spirit, and by his providence, to “watch and be sober.” But, through infinite mercy, my health is in a measure restored, though I daily feel the pins of the old tabernacle being taken out, and the house tottering over my head; my sight also is so far gone, that for two years and upwards I have required a guide to walk even at noonday.

I embrace the present opportunity of my little grandson being with me of scratching a line, hoping it will meet you in the full possession of health, that best of earthly favours; living under the blest anticipation, when this life of sin, sorrow, and suffering shall conclude, of entering upon that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that cannot pass away.

I know not how it may be with the dear friend to whom I write, and the Lord's heritage at Lewes, respecting things spiritual; but with me it is “a day of small things;” indeed, “the gold is become dim,” and the salt has, as to sensible enjoyment, “lost its savour.” But I bless the God of all grace for his word of promise, that meets me as I am, with all my wants, wounds, and wretchedness. I bless him for the revelation of Jesus Christ, with all the fulness and freeness of his great salvation, “without money and without price.” I want to be living more on his fulness, “in whom it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell.” “Thy kisses,” says blessed Rutherford, “have been sweet unto me; but I want to live more on thy fulness, and to receive from thee, O thou ‘Chief of Ten Thousands and altogether lovely’ Jesus, grace for grace.”

Tender my most affectionate regard to your beloved pastor, with all the “salt of the earth” at Lewes; wishing them every blessing of “the better covenant,” which is ordered in all things well.

To Mr. G. I am indebted; and to him, with the friends at Brighton, it would give me pleasure to acknowledge my obligation in person; but this in all probability I shall never be able to do.

The Lord bless you with the sensible tokens of his presence, hear your prayers, and out of his riches by Christ Jesus supply your every need.

I remain, Sir, with due respect, in the bonds of the gospel,
Thy brother in Christ,

JOHN KENT.

INQUIRY.

Messrs. Editors,—Is it unscriptural or inconsistent for persons to attend a prayer meeting, and immediately afterwards return to their daily calling?

By giving your opinion you will greatly oblige.

AN INQUIRER.

June, 1850.

[There is no inconsistency in it if it be a lawful calling. Might not Paul have left his half-finished tent on a week day, and gone and preached, and come back and completed it before bedtime? What sin is there in working at a lawful calling? and how can attending a prayer meeting make that sinful that was not so before? What sanctimonious Pharisaism is this! Is it sinful to attend on a lawful calling after private prayer, after family prayer? If not, why after social prayer? Generally speaking, it is too late for work afterwards; but the presence of the Lord enjoyed at the prayer meeting and brought back, would make the shuttle fly faster, the saw and plane move easier, and business behind the counter be done more in the fear of God.]

SPIRITUAL FRAGMENTS.

Because Jesus Christ does the work, fights the battle, and brings victory, he is rightly called the Saviour. I must watch against the inroads of an enemy, and when he comes in sight, must wrestle well with prayer, and "fight the fight of faith." But if I thrust my arm into the battle, Jesus will withdraw his own; he will be all or nothing.—*H. Fowler.*

Nothing is more common than to hear professors of religion cry out against sin in others, and speak much about sin, in *general terms*; but it is evident that such persons are entire strangers to their own sinful hearts. To inveigh against sin in others is a common mark of the hypocrite, and it serves as a cloak to conceal from the view of many the rottenness of their own hearts and the emptiness of their profession. Between such poor blind creatures, and sinners truly convinced of their state by nature and by practice, there can be no real union or communion, though it is possible that both may attend the same preaching, be members of the same church, and both profess to believe the same truths. Reader, art thou a professor of religion? how didst thou come by thy profession? examine the ground of thy confidence: for, be assured of this, unless thou art born again of the Spirit, thy confidence is vain, and will deceive thee in the last important moment.—*H. Fowler.*

A LETTER BY THE LATE JOHN KEYT.

Much esteemed Friend,—Accept my sincere thanks for thy kind and affectionate epistle. It came in due season, when I was weary; being much bowed down with more burdens than one, but more especially with this body of death. This I find the worst of all plagues; for a host of internal enemies is far worse than an army without. A cold, lifeless, stupid, unfruitful frame I hate, and this is too often my sad case. Thy letter came like a drop of oil upon the rusty handles of the lock; like a live coal upon the cold heart; or like a still small voice to arouse the lethargic spirit, and proved a sweet comment on the saying of the wise man, “Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow,” &c. Again, “If two lie together, they have heat; but how can one be warm alone?”

It is, my brother, very desirable to walk in the light of God’s countenance, to enjoy that heavenly-mindedness which is attended with so much life and peace; to walk upon the high places of communion with the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ. But we must go out, as well as in; we must endure as well as feast; we must fight, as well as triumph; for it is evident that we are not yet come to the rest which the Lord our God has promised to give us. But the sweet earnestness of it we have certainly received and richly enjoyed, and blessed be the name of the Lord for it! Yet a little while, my dear friend, and the Canaanite shall be found no more in the house of the Lord of Hosts; ere long the reproach of Egypt will be completely rolled away, and we shall get far beyond the reach of Satan’s fiery darts. A few more easy stages will bring us to the end of tribulation’s thorny path; then we shall ever have done with conflicting enemies, no more walking in darkness and mourning for want of the precious light of the sun; then we shall fully experience the sweetness of this promise, “And my people shall be satisfied with my goodness.”

I was reading, last night, the two last chapters in the book of truth; and it is a pleasing consideration to believe that, when our warfare is finished and our wanderings in this wilderness are ended, we shall enter into the happy enjoyment of the things contained in these closing chapters of the book of Revelation!

How many good and comfortable words has God spoken to our hearts! How many gracious visits he has granted us in the house of our pilgrimage! How many refreshings from his presence in the congregation of his saints, under the preaching of the gospel by the mouth of his own ordained servant; in social and in private prayer; in the reading of, and meditation upon his blessed word of truth! And how exceedingly great and precious do these high favours appear, when we are led to reflect upon what by nature and by practice we once were! O what debtors are we, my brother, to the rich, free, sovereign grace of the almighty and eternal God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! How effectually has he delivered us from vain boasting and from all confidence in the flesh! What various dispensations

and operations, what long-suffering goodness and mercy have been manifested, in order to purge away our dross, and form us for himself to show forth his praise! Thus far the Lord has helped us; and while we travel on he has promised "to water us every moment, and keep us night and day." Therefore in his strength let us go forward, cleaving to and trusting in the God of our salvation, seeing he has promised that "no weapon formed against us shall prosper, and every tongue that riseth in judgment against us we shall condemn." In waiting upon God, our strength has been renewed times without number; and for our comfort he has promised, that "they shall not be ashamed who wait for him."

Excuse this poor scrap. I have no time to mend it, or to write it better; but time enough to subscribe myself most cordially and affectionately thine in the never-failing bond of charity,

THE POOR SHOPMAN.*

May 29, 1813.

WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT.

My dear Friend,—Truly "goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life," and I do "desire to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever," to be a living witness of the power of God made manifest in my soul all the days of my unprofitable life, and

"To tell to poor sinners round,
What a dear Saviour I have found."

But when the Lord shuts me up and hides his face, I have no feeling remembrance of his goodness and mercy, but am as stupid as an owl, as hard as a flint, as blind as a bat, and as dead as a post. Sometimes I fret, kick, and murmur, like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. But the dear Lord does not leave me here. He touches my heart again with his great goodness and mercy, which overcomes me, and breaks me down into love and gratitude. You know what a sweet change this is in soul-feeling. How acceptable this manifested mercy and grace to such poor, needy, naked, helpless, and sorrowful souls! What a support it is by the way! And how it strengthens us under temptations, bears us up under our sorrows, carries us through our troubles, and makes us fit subjects for himself! You know how these sweet seasons wear us from the love of the world, show us the vanity of all things here below, and draw our hearts and affections upwards to the place where his honour dwelleth! At these times we prove the sweetness and savour of vital godliness; we feel that Christ is precious, the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely.

What a mercy it is, my friend, that the Lord has manifested his great power and salvation to our hearts, opened up his beauty and blessedness to our souls, caused our hearts to rejoice in him as our God and Saviour, and enabled us to look forward with an everlasting consolation and a good hope through grace! What a mercy to have grace to wait for his Son from heaven, even Jesus, who hath delivered

* John Keyt.

us from the wrath to come! This is indeed a great favour, more so than to be the Queen of England, or to have the whole world in possession: "For what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Through the great goodness and mercy of the Lord, I arrived home safe on Wednesday morning, about half-past ten o'clock. My wife came to meet me near the Woburn station. Oh! my friend, what a great change the Lord has made in my house! For many months I have gone out from home and left my wife for the last time, as I have thought, and returned again and found her in bed under the greatest pain of body. For four years she could only just creep in and out to chapel, and this but at times. And to walk now two or three miles at a stretch! "What hath God wrought" for worthless me and mine? "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men; for he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness. Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron." Then what a power there is in delivering grace to knock off these chains and fetters, and bring the poor prisoner, out into God's marvellous light!

Yours affectionately,

Woburn, Sept. 6th, 1850.

T. G.

IF WE SUFFER, WE SHALL ALSO REIGN WITH HIM.

Dear Friend in the Lord,—I would say a word upon the best things, if the Spirit would give me utterance. I am often bowed in spirit; heart-bowed, tongue-tied, and dumb. O how I need the wisdom that cometh from above, and the mercy of God, for everything and in everything about sin and salvation! What a glorious gospel of the ever blessed God is that which saves a sinner from his sins in the manifestation of Christ, and discovers the dreadful character of the one in the light of the other! Life and immortality brought to light! Having the promise of the life of faith which now is, and the fruition of faith in the life to come,—an eternal weight of glory. Here we see through a glass darkly; have a ray of light now and then; have a given word now and then by the way, with much tribulation and many trials in our path to pass through. Changes in our views and feelings; darkness and light in our mind; groping, musing, wondering, sighing, fainting, fearing, and, what is worse, murmuring and rebelling.

What a chequered scene does this path present to the traveller! Up and down, hill and valley. What fires and floods! What hosts of foes and desponding fears! When Jesus comes all is right, when he is absent all is wrong. If we judge by sense, indwelling sin puzzles us to death. That God saves sinners who have nothing but sin, and can do nothing but sin, seems too wonderful to be believed. "Nevertheless, he saved them for his name's sake." Faith's anchorage is his blood and name, warranted by the given word of God, pleaded in prayer; and it is always successful in the end: "They

shall call on my name: I will say, It is my people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God." Grace, mercy, and peace be with you, dear friend, and may the Friend of sinners abundantly bless you with the riches of his grace. Trials we must have while we are here, for this is not our rest, it is polluted; everything beneath the sun is fading and dying. "Vanity of vanities," says the wise man. And all but Christ is deceitful vanity. Alas for myself! What is man? Vain and vile beyond word and thought, consequently not to be told. Yet God dwells with man, glorifies his grace, gives him his love. The delights of Jesus were with the sons of men; that fair bosom which exposed itself to the wind, storm, and tempest, when all forsook him and fled, contains love that passeth knowledge both in the nature and dimensions of it. "Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man." In Christ I am as an unborn child, a babe, a learner, a poor dull scholar. A taste I have. O for the Holy Ghost to dwell richly in our bosom, that by his unctuous power in an experimental way we may know all things that will be for our profit to our soul's prosperity, have the fear of the Lord, and learn more of the secret of faith; how to walk in the fear of the Lord, and walk in love with the church; how to follow Jesus in the regeneration by faith; have the mind, Spirit, image, and disposition of Christ sensibly in the new man of grace, so as to enable us to put off the old man, with his deeds, in our life and conversation. We cannot kill him, yet he is crucified. If we can forsake him and deny him, it is well so far. If we hate our life, it is because we see and feel it is opposed to Christ, who is our life in us. Death is dead and the devil is conquered; yet we must groan under the one and fight with the other. It is well that we have such a Captain, or the devil would soon conquer us. He is not to be played with; we had need be sober-minded for the safety of our walk; he sleepeth not. But the Lord keeps the city when we cannot watch one hour: "Kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation." Here is our security. I should wish to have a good deal of God in me and about me; I mean the life of God in my soul, and his sensible presence, or to be sensible of his presence to preserve me from every evil. I am often a lump of sin and death without feeling it, or a heart to lament over my wretched insensibility, deadness, barrenness, and unprofitableness. My mind is a chaos of confusion. I see nothing, am affected with nothing; my stupor and apathy are confounding. Perhaps this is a lesson for faith, for the mortification of pride and vainglory, in order that I may give all the glory to the God of all grace.

Mercy becomes endeared by sensible misery. When I fall down, the Lord helps me up. The proud independence of my heart has its dark abode in ignorance of Christ and unbelief. "Without me ye can do nothing." All wisdom, and all power, gifts, grace, and mercy are in Christ as a fountain, to be received as needed, that he may be glorified in weakness, poverty, and creature-nothingness, and God be all in all. The Lord only can teach to profit. Vain are the help and wisdom of man to effect anything. If he gives prayer to thrash the mountains and ask blessings, this is a gift. Grace and glory comprehend the life on earth and the life in heaven of those whose name is

written in heaven. To taste that the Lord is gracious, is a proof of covenant relationship with God as our God; to taste of the bitter cup, is to have fellowship with Christ's sufferings; and to see his stripes and wounds, and hear his groans, dolours, cries, and tears, by faith in the Spirit, is life for evermore. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him;" and at last to "be made like him, and see him as he is," will open to us more fully the meaning of the apostle: "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

It is but little I know of these things. Having confessed my ignorance, I would beg the Lord's mercy for all that I sully, clog, and spoil, and make a full stop, and conclude again, dear friend, with grace be with you.

With affection and respect, I am yours in the Lord,

Kings Cliffe, Aug. 16th, 1850.

R. H. J.

THE DANGER OF CHRISTIANITY.

"It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness." (2 Peter ii. 21.)

This is spoken of those who make a profession of Christ and free grace, and who are not in possession thereof. "Take care, O soul," Wisdom would say, "that thou art sure of Christ, or rather that Christ is sure of thee, through God the Father's bringing, engrafting, and fastening thee to Him, if thou art launched in a profession of Christ." It is to be feared that there are multitudes of poor empty things in a profession of grace, who take matters too much for granted. Jealousy is the rage of "a man;" and by it "coals of fire" are kindled. I have marvelled to see how easy men can be in a matter of such life and death, such eternal life and death, as religion. Then I have thought of that, "Many are called, but few are chosen." You will not find many with keen appetites after Christ. The ten spies that went into "the land," eight of them were not possessed of another spirit, like Caleb and Joshua. Eight of ten lost. Most of the six or twelve hundred thousand men and women that came out of Egypt were lost. The gleaning of grapes, the picking of olive-berries "left," "a small remnant," yea, a very small remnant, are the words, marking out the *true* elect. People may gird on the harness; but every man's judgment cometh of the Lord. It is true, Christ says he will not cast out any that come to him. But beware, says Wisdom, that thou art one who comes. In this day of fashionable religion, grace comes in for its share of hypocrites, or rather partly, I should say, for the *shallow* operations of the Holy Spirit. For in the preaching of grace, the *power* of the Lord Jesus being there to wound and to heal, many there, who are never to be saved, are exceedingly moved in their animal passions and in their minds, and, moreover, receive "gifts" of the Holy Ghost to return to God at the year of jubilee. The sixth and tenth of Hebrews, Jude, Peter's Second Epistle, and other parts of Scripture, show this. Christ knew what he was saying when he said "it was a strait gate and narrow way." I have found it so. I have been astonished at the ten thou

sand, or rather ten millions, or infinite thoughts which have rushed into my mind on these things." Suppose you should not be saved after all! How do you know you shall? How do you know the Scriptures are true? How do you know you have a soul? How do you know there is a God? And ten thousand questions of this kind. And though I have often been sorely afraid it would die away, yet I have still been surprised to see a principle ever more or less in me in opposition to all these confounding things; which principle bubbled and rose within, stirring me to fear and to prayer, searching the Scriptures, asking for an increase of the Holy Ghost, stirring me up to meditation and waiting on God. "Is there such a thing as truth?" said I. "Yes," say the Scriptures that cannot be broken. "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." First, *believing*, which is the gift of God. Secondly, *continuing*, in opposition to those who fall away either in this life or into hell. I have thought there will be a very small remnant saved in comparison with Satan's troops, who are bold and strong. It is a happy thing for those who, in the midst of ten thousand difficulties, are pressing their way into the kingdom of heaven. Ten thousand, did I say? I know not the end of the difficulties. Sorrows from without, sorrows from within. Digging with the spade of sorrow, digging with the spade of necessity. Hardly anything else but sorrow comparatively. I have thought three-quarters is sorrow—and one-half of the other quarter, too—to heaven; hence there is only half a quarter, and hardly that, in the real, true, and certain way to heaven:

"The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown.
In pity to the souls his grace design'd
To rescue from the ruins of mankind,
Call'd for a cloud to darken all their years,
And said, 'Go, spend them in the vale of tears.'"

You will scarcely ever find any humility except among the afflicted. The vanity of life is seen through scarcely by any else. It is one part of the character of the wicked that they have no trouble like other men. Hard, brawny, stupid, and dull, is the heart of man except where ploughed up effectually by the plough of God. Gifts; stony-ground hearing; the lamp and light of foolish virgins—Christianity of that kind will not disturb the lowest depths of the heart; neither will it fix the heart fast and firm in seeking Christ with the whole soul.

The danger of Christianity is here. It is "not every one that saith, Lord, Lord." "He shall be for a snare and a gin to both the houses of Israel." "It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness." The gospel net caught the bad fish as well as the good, of all sorts and sizes.

It is one part of the raging jealousy which is part of the communicable divine nature in every child of God, to examine, in the light of God, whether it be possible that he should be one of those bad fish caught in the gospel net, for whom it would have been better

not to have known the way of righteousness. As saith the proverb, "A miss is as good as a mile." These bad fish caught must fall away into hell, if not before. Fall away? None of men ever stood, as regards salvation, in God's sight, except the elect. None else ever stood except in their own conceit. To make out, through the Spirit, our calling and election, is no easy thing. To make it out clear, firm, and steadfast, in our own experience; to have a heart-felt sense of it, under the tuition of God; in heights and depths; in sorrow and joy; in heart-stirring scenes between God and the soul. In lesser or deeper troubles; in fears; in hopes; in almost despair; in dampings; in springings; in the severe strokes of adversity; in the frowns of an angry God. In the tossings of a tender conscience. In the clouds and sunshine of the Spirit on the soul. In spiritual days and nights; and you know nights in winter, partly, are from four in the afternoon to eight next morning. Long and dreary winters, spiritually, wherein little hopes appear. Deeper sinking in sorrow: "For the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow;" bad made worse. Again. How many things there are to try gold seven times over, as the elect are tried. The bad fish, in the gospel net, never swim the "black sea" of tribulation, as the elect do; neither is there, at all, the same *kind* of heart-felt fear of God; nor tenderness of conscience; nor real hope amid despair, in the non-elect, as in the true saints. Like a rose surrounded by prickles, so is saving and true grace in the soul. Accepting of the punishment of our sins; contented to be buffeted for our faults; sinking deeper into humility; meekly kissing every rod. If he is a preacher, let him wish to be an example to the flock, and not to come behind them in any grace whatever. This would cure some of the bad fish from wanting to preach, and would frighten the good fish from attempting, except under invincible constraint from God.

There are ten thousands of things to frighten a godly person, as to the danger of Christianity, in having every thought brought into captivity, feelingly in the soul, to the mind and will of Christ. "Oh," says he, "I can see, none can stand but those whom God is determined shall stand. Oh," says he, "the danger; going too slow at one time, going too fast at another. At one time, self-denial wanted; at another time, faith slow and dull. At one time thinking one thing is wrong; at another time thinking another thing is wrong. At one time apprehending danger from one quarter; at another time from another. In disquietude; in restlessness; in repenting; in fearing; in lying in one's bed, and making diligent search." "O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart." Searching for Achans. Coming to the light, as to whether the faith of God's elect is in any degree really in us; budding, swelling, rising in all the manifold operations of the Spirit within us. These things solidly realized, in some degree, in the soul, in solid vitality, produce a secret feeling, in trembling or solid hope, or faith, that certainly the unseen God of salvation, (seen in his operations,) is, or may be, or must be, secretly at work in us, actually and really. While on the one hand they make us feel the danger of religion, so on the other hand they make us sink

deeper into godly fear, and to feel that none but God's favourites shall ever be enabled to stand so fearful a storm; but that all the rest, however high in a profession of religion, must sooner or later tumble in this life or into hell; and then they will know the meaning of that word, in the highest sense, "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." None can build and put the roof on the house and completely finish it; and go to war and not have to send an embassy to say they will give out, in these fearful wars, except the elect. I am certain of it.

Abingdon.

I. K.

A LETTER BY THE LATE HENRY FOWLER.

My dear M,—I perceive by yours, which I perused on my return from the country this day, that you are not at ease in Zion; and God forbid that either you or I should be so. Better be plagued and chastened every day with "the iniquity of our heels compassing us about," than rest in carnal security. Indeed,

"A Christian man is seldom long at ease,
When one fright's o'er, another doth him seize."

You have now, I doubt not, a firmer belief in the truth of that text, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." (Jer. xvii. 9.) It is by the powerful operations of the Holy Ghost, enlightening and discovering the hidden things of darkness, that we truly know Adam's fall, and our fallen state by his; and the same blessed Spirit who discovers the spirituality of the law and the true nature of sin, discovers also to our hearts the all-sufficiency of Christ, and the blessedness of the free promise. But between sin and grace there will be, if not a continual, at least a frequent and severe conflict. This we find, and groan under, being burdened and heavily laden with unbelief, the master of the troop, so that we cannot do the things that we would. Still Christ is precious, and his word of immutable promise is your only stay and prop. And why is it thus? Because he hath died to redeem you; and having died to save you from the curse of the law, and brought you out of the house of bondage, he will grant you all-sufficient grace, that you may persevere unto the end, and at last receive the crown of righteousness, that fadeth not away. "My grace is sufficient for thee." I am not surprised at your complaints. I have this day the same complaints to make, and the same petitions to put up before God. Were it not for almighty power, I often feel persuaded I should never pray again, nor rejoice again. I have been in every hole and corner of Doubting Castle, and nothing ever brought me out but the key called *promise*. "He abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." I am but poorly. I feel increasing infirmities, and ere long the house must come down. The gipsy is in the house, and never will be destroyed till death, "when this corruption shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality."

Yours for Christ's sake,

HENRY FOWLER.

July 9, 1832.

THE PRESERVATION OF THE SAINTS.

NOTES OF A SERMON BY MR. WARBURTON, SEN., PREACHED AT TROWBRIDGE, ON TUESDAY EVENING, SEPT. 10th, 1850.

“Jude, the apostle of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called, Mercy unto you, and peace and love be multiplied.” (Jude 1, 2.)

So it appears that Jude does not direct this Epistle to all classes of professors, but specifies here who they are—the “sanctified of God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called; Mercy unto you, and peace and love be multiplied.” Now, this address is the sure word of God, and will be fulfilled to every poor soul, let him be where or what he may. The apostle Jude does not here say that it depends upon any doings of their own, upon second causes, but comes with a solid declaration, and says, “The sanctified by God the Father.” They are set apart in the purposes of his sovereign, discriminating love and grace. Loved of the Father for his own glory; for he said, “This people have I formed for myself, and they shall show forth my praise.” Therefore the Lord has told us that they are predestinated according to the counsel of his own will,—not to live licentious lives, and die in iniquity and be damned at last, but—“predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.” (Rom. viii. 29.) Now, my brethren, this is done in the purposes of God before we were born. Time has nothing to do with strengthening or weakening it. Time is but the blessed interpreter that opens up God’s purposes, whereby he displays the reality of his manifestations in the objects who are the sanctified in his purposes and love. Would to God you and I had more *love*! What poor finite worms we are, putting bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter, darkness for light, and light for darkness!

The “sanctified” of God the Father are as holy, as pure, as spotless, and as innocent in Christ, in the purposes of God’s grace, as if they had never committed one sin; therefore they are “complete in him;” yea, and the apostle tells us, as God’s mouth, that “they are made meet to be saints in light!” O the sanctifying love and purposes of God the Father set upon them from everlasting! This is very galling to carnal worshippers, sadly cutting to their pride, because it cuts off all their own sanctifying work. “O, but then,” say you, “read the Scriptures. God speaks about the people sanctifying *themselves*.” (Exod. xix. 10, 11.) Yes, how frequently God speaks to Israel as a nation! and temporal blessings and mercies God had coupled up with that nation. Yea, they were blessed in a temporal way; he saved them from many miseries; and it was, too, by God in his approbation of them as the God of nature, as well as the God of grace.

Now, God commanded Moses that Israel should be sanctified, and go up before him to the mount that he might give them the Law. Moses went down to the people, and commanded them to sanctify

themselves, to wash their clothes, and to go to meet God at the mount. And Israel sanctified themselves as well as they could, agreeably to Moses's command, and to God's command. But this sanctification, my friends, in washing their clothes, and being separate, and going so holy, was not a sanctification that could stand in the presence of a holy, just, and righteous God. When God, then, came to proclaim his holiness in his righteous law, with all the terror, the thunderstorm, the frowns, and the dismal blackness of the mount, this they, with all their sanctifying, could not endure; for God charged Moses that not a beast must touch the mountain, lest it should be thrust through with a dart. (Exod. xx. 18—21.) All their sanctifying, all their works, all their washing, and all their cleansing to go to appear before a just and righteous God, would not stand a moment in his approbation. But the sovereign purposes of the Father set apart the elect in Christ; and so choosing them in Christ, in Christ they stand. There he has placed his love, his mercy, his grace, his kindness, his compassion, his wonderful wisdom; and everlasting glory shines forth without a terror in Christ. No wrath here touches them, for they are pure and spotless in him.

So, my dear brethren, the sanctified of God the Father, and separate in Christ, stand in Christ approved. Therefore, in fulness of time they were "sanctified" by God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And that was by his work, by his death, by his sufferings, by his atonement, and by his standing in their law-place and stead. Here he took away all their guilt, all their pollution, and all their wretchedness, from head to foot, from thought to word, and from acts past, present, and to come, all in a mass: for the apostle says, "He was made sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. v. 21.) Therefore, says the apostle, "he is made unto us wisdom, sanctification, and redemption." He was, and is, all this unto them before ever they were born. Why, what are all thy devilishness and carnality, and all thy darkness, and all thy wanderings? what had all this to do with it? Poor dear soul! before ever thou wast brought into existence, before ever thou wast born, this blessed Christ was made of God to be thy wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, without any of your doings, your cultivation, your beautiful performances that you have tried. What are all these, without the sanctifying of God the Father and of God the Son? He has taken the case into his blessed hands, and paid all in thy room and stead. "Ah!" some people say, "if they keep it and cultivate it, and if they will be watchful and mindful." He says, "We are made of God," and "he is made unto us righteousness." Therefore, poor soul, whoever thou art, that art brought, with all thy ignorance, darkness, and confusion, to Jesus, wisdom will open it up in its proper time. It is made over, it is in Christ; sanctification and redemption are made over also by God's sovereign, discriminating act; so that there is not a possibility of a single failure of these sanctified ones. The apostle says, "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also hath loved the church." (Ephesians v. 25). It is all in the past tense, all done, all past

and done. Why, poor dear child of God, every failing, and every misgiving, and every darkness, and every fear, and every wretchedness, all are past and gone. Thou mightest as well look into a den of devils as at thyself; there is nothing but darkness there. But the apostle says, "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." Ah, blessed truth! how precious is it! Gave himself for the church! To whom did he give himself? Why, he gave himself into the hands of divine justice for the church! to justice, not to damn, nor touch them, nor send them to everlasting misery. But this was all to fall upon himself. He gave himself up into the hands of man to be crucified. He gave himself into the hands of devils, to tempt him forty days and forty nights, all for the benefit and for the sufferings of his poor children: "Who gave himself for us, that we might be sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water by the word." (Ephes. v. 26). O, he will present a glorious church! There is not a single particle of your doing in it, nor mine either; and yet, I tell you what, my dear friends, my heart and soul are doing and doing. I want to be more diligent, and want more edification, and want this, that, and the other; yet when now and then God the Spirit comes and leads my soul beyond all fleshly doings and performances into that blessed work of Christ which is *done*, it makes my soul rejoice. And this is done that he might present them glorious, just, and without blemish; not even a blemish! even a single blemish cannot stand the scrutinizing eye of God in the face and eyes of divine justice! Without a single spot, or without a single failure! All washed away! He will take away their iniquities like a cloud, and completely sink them out of sight for ever and ever. And here in this way God said, "I have not seen iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel." "When his iniquities are sought for they shall not be found." (Jer. 1. 20.) For God the Son has washed them all away out of the book of God's justice: "Therefore," the apostle speaks again with such blessedness and glory, (O, this has done my soul good many a score times, when God has brought it with power to my heart,) he says, "by one offering he hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified." (Heb. x. 14.) What a blessing, then, to be one of these sanctified ones in Christ from everlasting! And how is this brought about? By the sanctifying work of God the Holy Ghost. O what a wonder is Christ, and the doctrine of the holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Spirit—one God; three divine Persons in one God. God never designed that this should be fully opened up to you and me: never designed to give an account of how it is. What have you and I to do with the how or the wherefore? The word of God reveals that "there are three that bear record in heaven. And these three are one." (1 John v. 7.)

Now, God the Holy Ghost sanctifies all whom the Father and the Son have sanctified. God the Holy Ghost sanctifies by his blessed work, his operations, his teachings, leadings, and his carrying on the work in the hearts of his children. It is not a joint work between the Spirit and the Christian; not a joint work. I will tell you how

it is, my dear friends,—however, how I find it. God teaches his own people that they can do nothing, that they can have nothing, that they can believe nothing, that they can love nothing that is spiritual, that they can pray for nothing that is spiritual, that they can be thankful for nothing that is spiritual. God works this in their hearts. These souls will never claim anything in the sanctification of their hearts. No, no, my friends, there is as much difference between the flesh and the Spirit, as there is between light and darkness, or between earth and hell. But you and I are so dark, such ignorant wretches by sin, that it is impossible for us to see it unless God shine into our hearts. And here it is that mere professors are mistaken. Empty professors are looking to the outside, but real possessors are looking to the inside work of God all their life long. So that there is a separation in the sanctifying work of the Spirit. This blessed work of the Spirit in taking possession of the heart, how it separates! and it is made manifest; for they begin turning, and repenting, and weeping, and praying, and begging. These are the operations that are acceptable to God. God's work cannot be overturned, and therefore it says, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of God the Spirit, unto obedience and the blood of sprinkling." (1 Peter i. 2.) So that you see it is through the sanctifying of God the Spirit; not through their works, not through any merit of theirs, nor through any performances of theirs; but through the sanctifying influences of the Spirit. Now this, my friends, is evidently of God. The poor child of God wants to get better, he wants to come and bring something before God. He thinks he will be more holy, and that then he shall be better; but the Spirit gives him to see more and more of his vileness, more and more of his wretchedness; and that cuts him off from every particle of holiness in himself, and brings him to have such a sight and sense of his own wretchedness and misery, that he feels a hell-deserving sinner, is brought to the foot of the cross, and cries, "Lord, save, or I perish." God stops him from going about with a righteousness of his own; he is brought in obedience to the Son of God, and there to cry for his pardon fully and righteously to be brought into his heart. This is coming to glorify God. Here, my friends, they are sanctified of the Spirit, and it will be so all our journey through life.

There never is a single thing that the children of God set up, but the Spirit will come and cut it down; for he will have nothing at all but Christ, and all rests entirely upon him. As the Spirit's work goes on in the heart we sink more and more out of self, and are brought to hang upon Christ as the only refuge. I will tell you what, poor dear soul, God keeps thee very poor in thine own sight; God keeps thee a poor mortal, and a poor beggar, stripped of everything but Christ; and what a blessed thing that is! "Oh!" says the soul, "I want to feel the blood of sprinkling, and the liberty and truth of it more than I do, in order to bless and praise God more; for now and then for a moment I do feel the sweetness and liberty of it, and its sanctifying influences." The Spirit is bringing you to Jesus, is

stripping you of self. Thou hast no more to do with sanctifying thy spirit than my hand has to do with my soul. It is the work of the Holy Spirit; and the more his sanctifying work goes on in the heart, the more we shall hate ourselves, the more our souls will be longing for Christ, to be found in him. When the blessed and sanctifying influences of his work are made manifest, O what joy there is, what melting, and what blessed humbling of self are there! When the precious blood of Jesus is shed abroad in the heart, and his sanctifying influences are felt in the soul, how the world drops, and how creature objects drop! we can leave all in the hands of our God. Well, then, says the apostle—and what a blessed saying! “Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus.”

“Preserved in Christ Jesus.” It is not meant that they are preserved always in a comfortable way and manner, always preserved from sinking, preserved from afflictions, and trials, and temptations; no, no. It is not meant that they are ever preserved from these—this is their lot, the path that all the sanctified of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, must tread, in such measure as God has appointed, in the footsteps of Christ; and that was through sorrows, afflictions, and trials. This is their lot while here upon earth. But they are preserved in him from all enemies, for none shall finally overthrow or finally overturn them. They may sink by the way, they may drop into black despondency, they may be brought to cry with Job, “Why hast thou given light to a man?” and even with the prophet Jeremiah, “Thou hast hedged me about;” “he hath led me and brought me into darkness, but not into light;” but, my brethren, they are preserved in Christ Jesus, locked up safe in Christ. Aye, and what a wonderful deliverance did Job find in God’s own time, and the prophet Jeremiah! You know he said he was “sanctified from the womb, and ordained as a prophet unto the nations.” (Jer. i. 5.) He was an upright soul, and a man possessed with a tender conscience. So was Job; and yet how God suffered him to be tried; but never let him fall. He was preserved in Christ. He was locked up safe in him, for God said first to the devil: “All that he has is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand;” and the second time, “Behold he is in thy hand: but save his life.” His life was bound up in the hand of God, and in the covenant of the Lord Jesus Christ. Here he was hid, and not a possibility of his ever being cast out. But it appears as if he had lost all his hope; “no,” he says, “my hope is removed like a tree.” But he could neither die nor live till God’s time came. So that they are preserved in Christ from all their tribulations, sorrows, griefs, and miseries, either in providence or in grace; they are safe preserved in him. Aye, and they are called his house, his dwelling-place; and he is their dwelling-place, and therefore he is “in them,” and they are in him, and preserved in him. This is where He lives, where He abides, and where He for ever takes up his residence. Oh! bless his precious name, the hearts of God’s people are in him; and his love is set upon them from everlasting: so that they are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens

with the saints, and of the household of God, in whom the whole building is compact. They are compact in the Lord; in him they are a "holy temple." It is a glorious building—if you will allow me the expression—it is a beautiful house in Christ; thus they centre in him, and grow up in him for a habitation of God the Holy Spirit. There is no merit nor human works here to claim a particle of it. These living stones will never be removed. No, my friends, he is the Foundation, and he is the Corner Stone; and they will bring forth the top-stone, shouting Grace. They are to live in the building of the house of God, and they can never be separated from him, the blessed Foundation and the Corner Stone. Poor souls, you are trembling sometimes; and such a particle of dust, you think you will be lost. There is one thing God says, that in his temple "every one shall speak of his glory." Hast thou any glory to speak of? "No," says the soul, "no; I am a beast; I am a dragon, an owl, a wretch—a poor wretch, that is not worth anything for God or man." Well, dost thou want to speak of anything but God? No. "They shall speak of his kingdom, and talk of his power." Now, God says, "I will glorify the house of my glory." (Isa. lx. 7). Ah! poor dear souls, they do not glorify the house of their glory; it is the Lord. And that sweet passage of David has been in my heart many a time, and the tears running down my poor old cheeks when I have thought of it: "Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort." (Psalm lxxi. 3.) God is their habitation, and God glorifies them, and they glorify God. So that, my friends, they are preserved in him as his habitation and as his dwelling place. "But," says the soul, "he does not dwell in my heart." Dost thou hate sin? Does thy soul mourn and grieve to see thy wanderings? Does thy heart pant for a reviving time? Can thy soul at times breathe out from the bottom of thy heart, "O Lord, let thy countenance shine upon me, that I may be revived, and turn my captivity, that I may have one testimony that thou art my God?" The devil cannot do this, nor can thy flesh do this; there is none that really produces this from the heart but the Spirit of God, who leads the panting soul after him again and again. My friends, it is a hatred to sin, and grief for our iniquities. This is the fruit of the work of the Spirit. They are preserved in Christ as his blessed body.

Dear friends, I think I shall leave it just as it is, for you will be very tired; and perhaps I may attempt to speak from these words some other time.

THE LIGHT OF THE RIGHTEOUS REJOICETH, BUT THE LAMP OF THE WICKED SHALL BE PUT OUT.

I awoke this morning, and the first thing which presented itself to my mind was what our Saviour said to his disciples, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me." Christ

was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: "Behold and see," saith he, "if ever sorrow was like unto my sorrow." We read of his "weeping," "groaning in spirit," and being "troubled," and of his soul "being exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." All these sufferings were on our account: "In him was no sin, but he was made sin for us;" "The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all," and it is "by his stripes that we are healed." "For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is for ever set down at the right hand of God," where he lives to "make intercession for us."

Whatever you or I, my dear friend, may suffer here, the afflictions that we endure "are not worthy to be compared with that glory which shall be revealed." Sin procures the whole of our sufferings; and as you find, from life being given you to feel your perishing condition, and light to discover the polluted state you are in, that "sin has reigned unto death," so I believe that you will sooner or later find that "grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life." We have the sentence of death in ourselves. The law is the ministration of death, and the law worketh wrath. By it is the knowledge of sin: "Without the law sin was dead." But when the commandment comes home, and we see its spirituality, this teaches us that "we are carnal, sold under sin;" "sin revives, and we die." While under this teaching the mind is confused, much enmity is felt, and the heart is hard; we know that we have destroyed ourselves, and our spirit sinks; we always feel unsettled, and are very disquieted; we want rest, but find none; are always in a hurry, always in haste, very impatient, envious, obstinate, and proud. But he that is of a proud heart findeth no good. Our mind, like David's, is distracted while we suffer His terrors; His wrath lieth hard upon us, and his hand presseth us sore; the terrors of death are fallen upon us, and our heart is sore pained within us, and, like the Psalmist, we hasten our escape from this stormy wind and tempest. Christ is set forth as a refuge from the storm and a covert from the tempest; he is the hope set before us, and we are exhorted to flee from the wrath to come. "The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail." Every man, by nature, is proud and lofty: and the wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God. It is, then, by hard labour that his heart is brought down: "By sorrow of heart the spirit is broken, and heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop." It is a long time before we are brought down. He smites, but we go on frowardly in the way of our heart, and turn every way but the right. Sometimes we run forward, and then again we hang back; then turn sullen and are very perverse: "Our mouth utters perverseness, and we enter into contention." This calls for more strokes, and these must come till we are brought to be passive. "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day;" and I believe that all that we go through is to bring down our pride, that we may be abased and Christ Jesus exalted.

It was pride in Satan that caused him to rebel: he is "king over all the children of pride;" and it is pride in all them in whose heart he reigns and rules, that will not suffer them to submit to God. And we ourselves never should, did not the Lord humble us, and bring us to be passive and to accept the punishment of our sin: "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven."

What is required in the precept is amply supplied in the promise; what was lost in the fall, is restored to us in Christ Jesus, who undertook for us, and was made perfect through suffering, and was in all points tempted like unto us. "He died for our sin, and is risen again for our justification." When he appeared to the two disciples after his resurrection, he says, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and then to enter into his glory?" and then he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself, and told them that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name. Jesus was "made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death," and then was crowned "with glory and honour." The sufferings went first, and the glory followed after. There is a measure of Christ's suffering to be filled up in the body, which is the church, and the Saviour tells us that we shall drink of the cup that he drank of. Paul says, "I fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ, in my body;" and then, when he had finished his course, he received a crown of righteousness. This is the prize which is set before us; and "if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." Mind not what any one says; let them all curse, but bless Thou! "Marvel not if the world hate you, but rather rejoice." "Ye know," says Christ, "that it hated me before it hated you." The bond-children always did, and ever will hate them which are born after the Spirit. Go on, and seek the approbation of God; seek his favour, and thou shalt not seek in vain. What they say is true, you will know better in time. We have this promise: "He that hath begun this good work will carry it on," and all that are taught of him shall know him; and this path of the just shall be as a shining light. "The light of the righteous rejoiceth, when the lamp of the wicked shall be put out." The little hope that you feel at times be thankful for, and be earnest in seeking more grace, more light, and more life. "Give him no rest," says the prophet, "till his righteousness goes forth as brightness, and his salvation as a lamp that burneth."

That you and I may grow up together till we meet in the unity of the same faith, and come to a perfect knowledge of the Son of God, is the hearty prayer of

Your affectionate friend,

Leicester.

J. C.

INDEX.

A Correspondence between Mr. Huntington and a Friend, on Ezek. xlv. 9	166
Address to the Readers of the "Gospel Standard"	1
Adoption, The Spirit of	263
Afflict willingly, He doth not, nor grieve the Children of the,	281
Agnes Beaumont, the Singular Experience, and Great Suffering	136, 172, 181
A Just God and a Saviour	276
A Letter by Mr. Huntington	17, 344
the late John Kent	144, 343, 411
J. M'Kenzie	88, 203
Mr. Brook, of Brighton	69, 202, 379
Mr. Gadsby	30, 284
Mr. Symons, of Bristol	31
from John Knox to his Mother-in-law	84
Mr Beeman to Mr. Keyt	302
the late Henry Fowler	33, 420
John Keyt	319, 413
to his Wife, by the late W. G. Brook	202
An account of the Death and Experience of T. Boorne, Greenwich	241
An Inquiry	359, 412
An Original Letter by the late John Kent	343, 410
Answers, Prayer and its	57
Arm of Power, God's, all-sufficient for his Saints. By the late H. Fowler	269
A Short Discourse by Mr. Huntington	298, 369
As many as I love I rebuke and chasten	89
Beaumont, Agnes, Her Singular Experience, and Great Sufferings.	136, 172, 181
Beeman, Mr., A Letter from him to Mr. Keyt	302
Beggar, The Meditation of a	266
Berridge, Extract from	304
Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord	142
Boorne, T., An Account of his Experience and Death	241
Brook, W. J., A Letter of the late	69, 379
to his Wife	202
Bunyan, John, on Gospel Righteousness	12, 204
But we glory in Tribulation also	54
By it he, being dead, yet speaketh, VII.	271
VIII.	341
Cennick, J., The Experience of	37, 100
Chasten, As many as I love I rebuke and	89
Christianity, The Danger of	415
Chastening	21
Comfort, &c., Sorrow and. By John Rusk, 45, 93, 130, 149, 189, 223	253, 312, 345, 361

	Page
Correspondence (A) between Mr. Huntington, and a Friend, on Ezek. xlv. 9	166
Covenanting with God, On, by Halyburton	120
Dead (Blessed are the) which Die in the Lord	142
“De Servo Arbitrio” (Extract from Luther’s), or “The Slavery of the Will”	90
Death and Experience, An Account of the of G. Boorne	241
Discourses (Short) by Mr Huntington, I.	228
....., II.	369
E. C., Extracts from Letters respecting, who died January 15, 1845. 351	
Editor (To the) of the “Gospel Standard”	30
Editor’s Address to the Readers.....	1
—— Notes, 24, 72, 76, 84, 90, 94, 109, 110, 111, 112, 114, 115, 124, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 156, 379, 380	
—— Remarks	1, 359
—— REVIEW: “A Stone from the Brook,” &c. By W. Brown 207, 246	
Erskine, Ralph, on the Little City Besieged and Delivered, &c. 8, 60, 79	
Even to Hoar Hairs will I carry you	71, 261
Experience (The) of J. Cennick.....	37, 100
—— of William Harley	289, 336, 381, 403
—— (The Singular) and great Sufferings of Agnes Beau- mont, &c	136, 172, 181
Extract.....	16, 232, 304
—— from Berridge	304
—— from Dr. Owen’s Sermon	402
—— from Luther’s “De Servo Arbitrio,” or “The Slavery of the Will”	90
Extracts from Letters respecting E. C., who died January 18, 1845, 351	
Faithfulness (God’s) to his Promises	296, 325
Fare, Paupers’	278
Father to a Son, (Letters from), I.....	140
..... II	195
..... III	317
Fowler, Henry, A Letter from the late	33, 420
—— on God’s Arm of Power all-sufficient for his Saints 269	
—— on Peace Proclaimed by the God of Peace	155
Fragment of a Letter by Leighton.....	103
Fragments, Spiritual, 35, 36, 52, 72, 88, 108, 160, 180, 200, 216, 245, 324, 344, 360, 410	
Fruit in Old Age, They shall bring forth	273
Furnace of Affliction, I have chosen thee in the	377
Gadsby, William, A Letter by the late	30, 234
God (A Just) and a Saviour	276
God of Peace, Peace proclaimed by the. By Henry Fowler	155
God, On Covenanting with. By Halyburton	120
God’s Arm of Power all-sufficient for his Saints. By the late H. Fowler ..	269
God’s Faithfulness to his Promises.....	296, 325
God Wrought, What hath	414
Gospel Righteousness. By John Bunyan	12, 204
“Gospel Standard,” Address to the Readers of the.....	1
“Gospel Standard,” To the Editor of the.....	50
Grace Superabounding.....	27
Halyburton on Covenanting with God	120
Happiness, Israel’s	397

INDEX.

	Page
Harley, William, Experience of.....	289, 336, 381, 403
He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of men	281
He hath put a New Song into my Mouth	305
Hell, I look for, he brought me Heaven	157
Henry Fowler, A Letter from the late	33
———— on God's Arm of Power all-sufficient for his Saints	269
———— on Peace proclaimed by the God of Peace	155
He Satisfieth the Longing Soul, and Filleth the Hungry Soul with Goodness	177
Hoar Hairs (Even to) will I carry you	71, 261
Holiness, or Sanctification	309
Huntington, William (A Correspondence between) and a Friend, on Ezek. xlv. 9.....	166
———— A letter by	17, 344
———— Short Discourse by, I	228
————, II	369
I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me	53
I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life	125
If we Suffer, we shall also Reign with Him	413
I have chosen thee in the Furnace of Affliction	377
I looked for Hell, he brought me Heaven	157
In all Things we are Instructed	34
Instructed, In all Things we are	34
In this Tabernacle we groan, being burdened	159
Inquiry	339, 410
Israel's Happiness	397
I will pardon whom I reserve.....	19
James Lewis, Letters by the late	306
John Bunyan on Gospel Righteousness	12, 204
—— Cennick, The Experience of	37, 100
—— Kent, A Letter by the late.....	144, 343
——, An Original by the late	343
—— Keyt, A Letter by the late.....	319
—— Knox, A Letter from, to his Mother-in-law	84
——, The Last Days of	109, 145
—— M'Kenzie, A Letter by the late	88, 233
—— Rusk, on Sorrow and Comfort, &c., 45, 93, 130, 149, 189, 223, 253, 312, 345, 361	
—— Symons, A Letter by the late	31
Judgment, The Lord Known by his	115, 161, 197, 233
Just God (A) and a Saviour	276
Kent, John, A Letter by the late	144
——, An Original Letter by the late	343
Keyt, John, A Letter by the late.....	319
——, Mr., A Letter from Mr. Beeman to	302
Kingdom of God (The) is not in Word, but in Power	24
Knox, John, A Letter from, to his Mother-in-law	84
——, John, The Last Days of	109, 145
Last Days (The) of John Knox	109, 145
Leighton Extracts of a Letter by	103
Letter (A) by Mr. Huntington	17, 344
———— the late John Kent	144, 343
———— J. M'Kenzie	88, 203
———— Mr. Brook	69, 202, 379
———— Mr. Gadsby.....	30, 284
———— Mr. Symons	31
———— John Knox to his Mother-in-law	84

INDEX.

	Page
What hath God Wrought.....	414
Whom having not seen ye love	201
William Gadsby, A Letter by the late	30, 284
William Huntington (A Correspondence between) and a Friend, on Ezek. xlvi. 9.....	166
----- A Letter by	17, 344
----- Short Discourse by, I.	228
-----, II.	369
W. J. Brook, A Letter of the late	69, 379
-----, to his Wife.....	202
With joy shall ye draw Water out of the Wells of Salvation	387
Without me ye can do nothing	283
Worm, Upon a poor polluted, he makes his Glory shine	196

POETRY.

Poetry	72, 323, 360
The Cry of One in Distress.....	108
The House of Wisdom Built, and her Table Furnished	144
The Lord is there	180