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JANUARY 1, 1866.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JANUARY, 1866.

MATT. V. 6; 2 TIM. I. 9; ROM. XI. 7; ACTS VIII. 37, 38; MATT. XXVIII. 10.

ADDRESS TO OUR SPIRITUAL READERS.

FROM almost the very commencement of our editorial labours we have attempted, at the opening of each successive year, to address to our gracious readers some words of friendly and affectionate counsel. The season itself seems to call for some such friendly greeting, some such affectionate recognition of the ties which have so long bound us together. Without scrupulously or superstitiously observing "days, and months, and times, and years," few of us altogether pass by so marked an epoch as the dawning of another year upon our path without some acknowledgment of it both to God and man. When we open our eyes on the first morning of the year, we almost instinctively say, "This is New-year's day." Nor is this, at least this should not be, all the notice we take, all the acknowledgment we make of that opening year of which we may not see the close. When we bend our knees before the throne of grace, we mingle with thankful acknowledgment for the mercies of the past year, both in providence and in grace, earnest petitions for similar mercies to be experienced and enjoyed through the present. Last evening witnessed our confessions of the many, many grievous sins, wanderings, backslidings, and departings from the living God during the year now gone; this morning witnesses our supplications for grace to hold up our goings in his paths, that our footsteps slip not through the year just come. Tears are most suitable at the burial of the dead; hopes and desires at the birth of the living. The past year was the departed sire, worn out with age and infirmity; the present year the new-born babe in the arms of the smiling nurse. It is still, however, mid-winter. To-day, the first of the present year, differs little in outward appearance from yesterday, the last of the past. But the thoughtful, prayerful mind takes little notice of wintry skies. It feels that the old, worn-out year has sunk into its grave, with all its trials and afflictions, and that a new year has come in its place, with its new hopes and new mercies; and if it bring new trials, yet that the promise still stands, that new strength will be given to meet and overcome them. Refreshed and strengthened at the throne by such or similar communings with the God of all our mercies, we go down to meet our families, and are at once greeted on all sides with, "I wish you a happy new year," a greeting which we as warmly and

affectionately return. Almost every friend, well-nigh every acquaintance that we meet with in the course of the day, greets us with the same kind wish. Now in all this there may be a great deal of formality, lip service, and traditional usage; but there may be also a good deal of sincerity, kindness, and affection. We are not, surely, so shut up in miserable self as to have no desire for the health and happiness, the temporal and spiritual welfare, of our families, our friends, or even our acquaintances. And if we desire their good, we need not be backward or unwilling to express it in a few words of friendly greeting. "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted;" "Be pitiful, be courteous;" "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men," are precepts imbued with all the spirit of the gospel, and may be, indeed, should be, attended to without the least sacrifice of that faithfulness which becomes those who would daily walk in the fear of the Lord. There may be a form of kind words as well as "a form of sound words;" (2 Tim. i. 13;) and as we may use the latter in perfect harmony with the doctrines of the gospel, so we may use the former in perfect harmony with the spirit of the gospel.

But we would hope that there is something better between our spiritual readers and ourselves than kindness and courtesy, and something warmer than the mere expression of mutual friendliness and affection at the opening of another year. We are not, at least by this time we should not be, altogether strangers to each other. In one point an editor, if not in others, much resembles a minister; his readers know much more of him than he can know of them. In the case of every sound and settled minister, his views of divine truth, his mode of setting it forth, his gifts natural and spiritual, his peculiar line of things in which and in which alone he is at home, or at all clear and strong, his very defects and infirmities, are all open to the view of, are all fully understood by, his intelligent and gracious hearers. A minister of any real weight and power, of any long standing and general acceptability, when permanently fixed over a church and congregation, gradually forms his own body of hearers. Those who cannot hear him, or at least, not to profit, gradually drop off, and there remains a congregation which receives his ministry, sees as with his eyes, drinks into his spirit, and is united to him in love and affection. He stands to them in time as a father to his children; and the tie being cemented by mutual affection, he becomes enabled and warranted to speak to and deal with them in a way which would not be consistent, nor indeed tolerated, in a strange minister, or a transient supply. Now, an editor cannot hope to attain a position so honoured as this, for he has not either the same divine commission,—the ministry being the ordinance of God, or the same authority and influence; nor has he that personal knowledge of his readers, or they of him, which the pastor has of his people, and therefore cannot gain that same amount of esteem and affection. And yet he may, nay must, if he be of any use at all to the church of God, attain a position in which his words may possess a weight and power not much inferior, and in some respects,

much more advantageous. How much wider is his field, how much larger his congregation; how his words can enter houses where his person would be rejected, and be read by foe as well as received by friend. The influence which the thoughts and opinions of others exercise over us often escapes our own notice. The power is so subtle, the effect often so gradual, and in its operation so blended with the workings of our own mind, that we can hardly distinguish between the influence and its effects, between what is another's and what is our own. And if this hold good in ordinary matters, how much more so in the kingdom of grace. Truth, we mean thereby divine truth, has a wonderful power and influence over the mind, wherever the eyes, ears, and heart have been opened to see, hear, and believe it. It carries with it its own evidence, and shines in the light of its own testimony. To know the truth and experience its liberating, sanctifying power; (John viii. 32; xvii. 17;) to receive the love of it; (2 Thess. ii. 10;) to be taught it by an unction from the Holy One; (1 John ii. 20, 27;) to be of it, and to know that we are of it; (1 John iii. 19;) for it to dwell in us, and for us to walk in it: (2 John 2, 4;) these are some of the peculiar marks of the living family of God; and if so, without them no minister, no book will be received by, or be acceptable to them. But where they find this truth, and it is commended to their consciences, there they will find an influence and a power, and that acting for their spiritual good.

But two things are specially needful for this active influence,—elements we may call them of spiritual weight and power.

1. The first element of this influence must be *confidence*. If we cannot trust a man either in private or public life, of what use or value can he be? From the errand boy to the bank director, from the little maid who runs with a letter to the post-office to the prime minister who holds the reins of government, confidence is the foundation of all the daily transactions of life. If without a large measure of mutual confidence between man and man, society itself could scarcely hang together, how much more is mutual confidence needed between men in those matters which relate to our soul's welfare and peace? But confidence, as Lord Chatham once said in his place in Parliament, is a plant of slow growth. And as it grows slowly, so it may slowly decline or suddenly fall. To a man in business credit is everything. What exertions will he make to obtain it; what sacrifices will he endure to maintain it! But shall the children of this world esteem loss of credit almost worse than loss of life? and shall the children of light be careless and indifferent to the loss of their Christian reputation? How careful, then, should be every minister, and every editor who professes the doctrines of our most holy faith, neither by word nor work to impair the confidence reposed in him. He should be as tremblingly alive to avoid everything to shake that confidence as a banker to prevent a run upon his bank. Nay, much more so; for the one may merely cause a temporary pecuniary loss, but the other permanent injury to the cause of truth and to his own happiness and usefulness. No

man is more despised, no man more justly despicable, than a time-serving minister. A shifting, time-serving editor is, in our judgment, scarcely less despicable. As there always have been and always will be religious parties, every party naturally, almost necessarily, if of any extent, seeks some recognized organ of opinion by which it may act and speak. Our desire and aim are, and always have been, to represent no party—or at least that party only which possesses and professes sound experimental truth, and sterling vital godliness. If we have any weight or influence, this is the secret of it, that we express what our spiritual readers believe and feel. We do not lead them, nor do they lead us. We are friends and brethren, not master and servants, nor servant and masters. It is the truth in the love and power of it which unites us—that secret, mysterious, invisible, and yet powerful bond which knits together as with ties of adamant all who see eye to eye, and feel heart to heart in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. But as contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, we may be considered to speak for many who have not the opportunity, or perhaps the ability, to speak for themselves. Because we do this, freely and simply putting forth from time to time what God, we hope, has taught us, and because what we thus write or insert expresses the views and feelings of many private Christians and of many ministers, we may be considered rightly or wrongly the organ of a religious body. “The Standard men” has become almost a word of reproach. Be it so. But let all know that as we allow no man to have dominion over our faith, so we exercise dominion over the faith of none. But even were it so that we do virtually represent a large body of Christian men and ministers, to be the free, unfettered, independent organ of a party is one thing, to be the tool of a party is another. A man, be he minister or editor, who will suffer himself to be the tool of a party, merits the end of all tools—to be thrown aside as useless and worthless when worn out, or the job is done. Dear readers, if we have not your confidence, we are no fit editor for you. If you read what we write or what we insert with any suspicion either of the genuineness of the article itself, or of our motives in bringing it before you, throw the book aside; you will get no profit from it; the secret suspicion that is working in your mind will poison the whole to you. But if you feel so far a confidence in us as an editor both as to what we write and what we insert, that we would not willingly deceive you or ourselves, for due allowance must be made for human weakness and infirmity, it imposes on us the greater obligation not justly to forfeit it, but rather seek to maintain and increase it to the utmost of our power.

2. The second element of weight and influence is *solid profit*. You may trust us so far as not to doubt our sincerity of purpose, or even our ability of performance; and yet derive little profit from our labours. Should this be the case, where or with whom the fault may lie, it is not for us to inquire, much less decide; but if you do not profit by our pages, do not read them. “In all labour,” says the wise man, “there is profit; but the talk of the lips tendeth only to

penury." (Prov. xiv. 23.) Judge for yourselves whether what we bring before you be the fruit of labour or the talk of the lips. If the former, it will feed and profit; if the latter, it will starve and rob you. In earthly matters, in the daily transactions of life, profit is the spring of business, the reward of labour, the soul of industry, sustaining and cheering all who live by the sweat of the brow or the sweat of the brain. Profit, in a higher sense of the word, is the strongest spring, as it is the sweetest reward, of all preaching, of all hearing, of all writing, of all reading, of all labour in the service of God and his word and truth. But what is profit, that is, spiritual profit? Let us seek to answer this question, and thus make it the chief purport of our present Address.

By profit, in a spiritual sense, we understand everything which enriches the soul, that is, makes it "rich toward God;" (Luke xii. 21;) communicates to it durable riches and righteousness, causes those who love the Lord to inherit substance, and fills their treasures. (Prov. viii. 18-21.) This is profit. Of this profit, of these treasures, Wisdom, that is Jesus, as of God "made unto us wisdom," (1 Cor. i. 30,) holds the key. Wisdom, therefore, cries aloud, "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies; and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her." (Prov. iii. 13-15.) And again: "Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold. For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it." (Prov. viii. 10, 11.) But as the fruit of this wisdom is to make us wise unto salvation, and as it is the free gift of God to those who feel their need of it, (James i. 5,) we have to cry and seek for it, but shall not cry and seek in vain. "Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." (Prov. ii. 3-6.) Few, however, seem to know, few to prize this heavenly wisdom, this divine teaching, this unction or anointing from the Holy One which teacheth all things, and is truth and no lie. Forms and ceremonies content some, a name to live satisfies others; a sound creed, with a tolerably consistent life, is enough for this professor, the approbation of men, the flattery of his own heart, are sufficient for that. But O the insufficiency, the emptiness, the deceptiveness of all these forms and shadows, when we are made to see and feel who and what we are; when our poverty comes upon us like an armed man; when our miserable destitution, nakedness, beggary, and thorough insolvency, with all their attendant wants and woes, stare us in the face; when we stand before the throne of the Most High without a rag to cover us, a refuge to hide us, or a plea to avail us. It is this view of ourselves within and without, this sinking down before God as the great Searcher of hearts, this deep and feeling sense of the pitiable state

into which sin, original and actual, has brought us, which, in the hands of the blessed Spirit, opens our eyes to see what alone can profit us. One beam of divine light shining into the soul is enough to show us not only what we are, but what alone can do us any good. One drop of the unction from the Holy One falling upon the lids is enough to open the eyes to see in whom all salvation is, from whom all salvation comes, and thus for ever to chase away those idle dreams, those vain delusions, those deceptive hopes in which thousands lie as in the midst of the sea, or upon the top of a mast. By hunger we learn what is true food; by thirst, what is pure water, wine, and milk; by want, what is kind charity; by cold and nakedness, what are warmth and clothing; by pitiless storms and beating rains, what are house and home, refuge and shelter. That, then, which feeds, warms, relieves, clothes, shelters, comforts, blesses, and saves the soul is that alone which profits it. Everything else, every other substitute, is but a stone for bread or a serpent for a fish; (Matt. vii. 9, 10;) the dream of a hungry man who eateth and awaketh, and his soul is empty; (Isa. xxix. 8;) ashes for food, and a lie in the right hand for substantial truth; (Isa. xlv. 20;) the vine of Sodom and the fields of Gomorrah for the best wine that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak. (Deut. xxxii. 32; Song vii. 9.)

But where or whence shall we get this solid, substantial food, this wine that maketh glad the heart of man, this oil that maketh his face to shine, this bread which strengtheneth man's heart? (Ps. civ. 15.) Is it not all in Jesus?—the risen, the ascended, the glorified, and glorious Son of the Father in truth and love? He alone is the bread of life to feed us; (John vi. 48;) the water of life to give us drink; (John vii. 37;) his justifying righteousness is our only acceptable dress; (Rom. iii. 24; Eph. i. 6; Phil. iii. 9;) his atoning blood our only redemption and remission of sins; (Eph. i. 7;) his word and promise our only hope; (Rom. iv. 18—21; 2 Cor. i. 20; Heb. vi. 18—20;) his sympathy and compassion as our great High Priest on his throne our main support; (Heb. iv. 15;) and his ability to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him our chief encouragement. But how are we to obtain this food, this shelter, this peace, this support, this strength and consolation? We see, clearly see, that it is not in us, and we see, clearly see, in whom it all centres. But to get at it, to draw it down into our own breast, to feed on the bread, to drink the milk and wine, to enjoy the peace, the rest, the quiet, the calm security, the deliverance from all foes and fears; to have the earnest and foretastes of eternal bliss, the sweet assurance of all sin pardoned, all backslidings healed, every crooked thing made straight and every rough place made plain; to have all bondage, distance, darkness, guilt, and apprehension fully removed, and to walk in the light of God's countenance as freely accepted in the Beloved—how shall these heavenly blessings be realised as our happy portion? Only as the blessed Spirit takes of the things of Christ, reveals them to us, gives us faith to believe in the Son of God, and by this precious faith to receive every mercy and blessing out of his fulness. We thus see

that before we can preach to profit, write to profit, and, we may well add, hear or read to profit, we must know and feel these three things: 1. A deep sense of our own emptiness, poverty, and destitution. 2. A view by faith of the Son of God as containing in himself all the treasures of grace and glory. 3. A communication by the blessed Spirit of some of these glorious riches feelingly and experimentally to our heart. In the transactions of business and daily life, profit is something real and tangible. It is not a set of account books or a balance sheet, a heap of bills or a row of figures, which at the end of the year shows the trader where he stands that he terms profit, but a real, solid, substantial addition to his income or his capital, to his necessities or his comforts, to the support and education of his family, to his honourable standing in business, to the increase and enlargement of his connection. It is this solid, substantial character stamped upon profits which makes them so sought after and so valued. And similarly, it is the misery of losses, and carrying on a sinking, unprofitable business which furrows the brow with care, fills the mind with gloomy anxieties, and embitters to thousands every day of their lives. Now take this parallel into the things of God. The profit of the soul is, or should be, as solid, as real, tangible, and substantial as the profit of business. The soul trades as well as the body; there is a business, a daily business, carried on in the closet as well as in the counting-house, at the throne of grace as well as behind the counter. The soul has its gains and losses, its receipts and payments, its account books—its waste book, journal, and ledger, the first for wasted time and opportunities, the second for the sins of each day, the third for the transgressions set down in the long debt book of memory during many years. But when the books are opened, a glance at their contents, for we need not sum up the totals or make a balance sheet, shows us our entire insolvency and total bankruptcy. Where then the profit if the whole be loss? Here, as we close the books in despair, and look upward as if without help or hope, a Friend above meets the eye who has beforehand paid every debt, and bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, “blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.” (Col. ii. 14.) Is there no profit here? What! No profit in his precious blood which cleanseth from all sin; no profit in his righteousness which justifies from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses? Why, it is all profit. This made David say: “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.” (Ps. xxxii. 1–2.) It is this which makes Jesus so suitable, so precious to those who believe, that in him we are blessed, already blessed, “with all spiritual blessings;” that “in him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;” that “in him we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” And why? “That we should be to the praise of

his glory who first trusted in Christ,"—not in ourselves, not in our good words or good works, not in our account books, but in Christ. (Eph. i. 3–12.) To set forth, to exalt, and hold up to believing eyes and hearts this glorious Christ, whether by tongue or pen, is to speak to profit, for in him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;" (Col. ii. 3;) and as these treasures are opened and their precious contents revealed, the believing heart becomes enriched by the communication of them through the blessed Spirit. Now we believe that none but the living family of God know, or care to know, for themselves anything about this spiritual profit. In fact, none but they have truly learnt that first element of divine teaching which makes us at all concerned about profit or loss. Our blessed Lord said, and his words touch this point to the very core: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. xvi. 26.) Thus there lies a deep and weighty matter at the foundation of the whole question about profit and loss—that I have a soul to be saved or lost. What then shall I give in exchange for my soul? for what am I profited if I gain the whole world and lose that? This deep conviction of a soul to be saved or lost lies at the root of all our religion if it be of God. Here, on one side, is the world and all its profits and pleasures; its charms, its smiles, its winning ways, its comforts, its luxuries, its honours, to gain which is the grand struggle of human life; there, on the other, is my solitary soul, immortal in a mortal body, to live in death, through death, and after death, aye, for ever and ever, when the world and all its pleasures and profits will sink under the wrath of the Almighty; and this dear soul of mine, my very self, my only self, my all, must be lost or saved. Everything then which I gain to the injury of my soul is positive loss, everything which I lose to the benefit of my soul is positive gain. Here is my measure, here my scale of loss and profit. My conscience keeps the account book in which the entries are made. There is a page on each side for debtor and creditor, a "To" and a "By." Against every sin, every idle or foolish word, every wandering glance, every infidel, unbelieving, unchaste, rebellious, fretful, murmuring thought, every proud, selfish, careless, carnal, worldly movement or desire, against all coldness, darkness, deadness, barrenness, prayerlessness, and the whole crop of earthliness there is a "By." But on the opposite page over against these numerous entries, these long, long sums there stands a "To." Every gleam and glimpse of divine light, every sweet season in prayer, every visitation of the Lord's presence and power which preserves the spirit, every gracious promise or encouraging invitation, every soft word or gentle touch, every kind whisper, every rising hope, in a word, everything which warms, cheers, melts, and raises the soul up from earth to heaven is a blessed "To;" for all are placed to our account as so many earnest and, as it were, prepayments of the infinite riches of the Son of God as made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. Now the main work of the ministry is to unfold this question of profit and loss, and examine, so to speak,

the account books of the family of God. Every living hearer brings his account book with him, and as he sits before the man of God he finds his accounts examined and entered into. The servant of the Lord enters first into our losses, and shows what we are by nature and practice, by sin original and actual, bringing against us debt after debt and bill after bill, conscience meanwhile not merely owning the truth of every charge, but secretly whispering, "Aye, and a thousand sins twice told which you have not mentioned and cannot, dare not mention," until down the poor soul sinks almost into despair, like a tradesman poring over his books in a very cold sweat of agony at the prospect of immediate ruin to crush him into the dust. But now the man of God opens the other side of the page, and holding up to view the Person and work, blood and righteousness, of the Lord the Lamb, not only shows every sin forgiven, every charge met and paid, every debt discharged, and full acceptance for the whole sum given; but, the blessed Spirit bearing his inward testimony, by describing the work of grace, proves to the soul's joy that it has an interest in the finished work of the Son of God. As then he shows that there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, and that where sin abounded there grace did much more abound, and this is received and believed, it raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the heggar from the dunghill to set him among princes, and to make him inherit the throne of glory.

This preaching is to profit, not like much in our day, a "subverting of the hearers" by perverse disputings and erroneous doctrines, (2 Tim. ii. 14 ; 1 Tim. vi. 5,) but a building of them up on their most holy faith. (Jude 20.) This sound, searching, experimental preaching, and, we may add, writing, for we may include both, communicates to the soul solid good, for it enters into the conscience, God's special domain, sometimes wounding, sometimes healing, but always, as owned and blessed of the Spirit, making it alive and tender, and thus fostering the fear of God as its choice treasure. By it, as a message from God, faith is strengthened, hope enlarged, love drawn forth, humility, meekness, brokenness and contrition of spirit produced or renewed; by it sin is made exceedingly sinful, and though the light which it casts into the heart, and perhaps upon some passages of the past life is sometimes almost too great to be borne, yet in that very light, and by the working with it of divine life, there is wrought a repentance, a godly sorrow, a self-loathing, a solemn casting one'self down before the Lord's feet, which though painful is felt to be profitable. Is not God's teaching to profit? (Isa. xlvi. 17 ?) Is not all Scripture "given by inspiration of God," that it may be "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works?" (2 Tim. iii. 16-17.) Does not Paul declare that in his preaching at Ephesus "he kept back nothing that was profitable," and that by so doing he was "pure from the blood of all men?" for "he shunned not to declare unto them all the counsel of God." (Acts xx. 20, 26, 27.) Are we not also told that "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every

man (that is, not every man universally, but every one of those to whom it is given) to profit withal?" (1 Cor. xii. 7.) If we are "God's building," is it not that our bodies may be the temples of the Holy Ghost? if "God's husbandry," that we may be "fruitful in every good word and work?" (1 Cor. iii. 9, v. 20; John xv. 1, 2, 8.)

Measure then, by this scale, all whom you hear, and all that you read. Let this be your simple question,—“Does it profit me? This ministry, this book, this company, this connection, this person, do I get real soul profit from them? How stands my account book? What says my conscience? Do I not know, do I not feel when I lose and when I gain, when I fall among thieves and am left half dead, and when the oil and wine are poured in, and I am bound up and healed? Why then should we encourage thieves and robbers? for such all are who enter not by the door into the sheepfold, (John x. 1.) whether in the ministry or out of the ministry. Will a banker keep a dishonest clerk, or a draper a thieving assistant? Are we then to encourage dishonest men, ministers or not ministers, erroneous books, and time-serving publications, when once our eyes are opened to see who and what they are, and that the truth in its real vitality and power is not in them? When we could only see men as trees walking, there was an excuse for some degree of unsteadiness and vacillation. Our natural kindness disposed us to think and hope well of almost all who made a profession of truth; our conscience would not permit us to speak against them, or separate ourselves from them. But when we have learnt by repeated and painful experience how hurtful their company or example has been to us, are we still to take them to our bosom and associate with them? Are we to give our ears to erroneous men, and our eyes to erroneous books, if we know anything of truth in its purity and its power? Are we to give our company to those who by their inconsistent conduct, carnal conversation, worldly conformity, light and trifling ways, vain presumptuous confidence, and utter want of everything gracious and spiritual in heart, lip, and life, can only rob and plunder our soul of every grain of tenderness, meekness, and godly fear? Do not sit under a ministry which starves or injures you. If we cannot find books which do profit us, let us read nothing but the blessed word of God; if we can find no simple, humble, spiritually minded child of God to walk with, let us rather walk alone, and commune with our own heart on our bed and be still.

With many of us life is fast ebbing away. Of some who read these pages, it may soon be said, “There shall be time with him no longer.” God's judgments are abroad in the land. He has smitten us with a most terrible stroke in this fearful cattle plague, of which we have seen the beginning; but who can tell the end? It may be soon with us in the words of the prophet, “The fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls.” (Hab. iii. 17.) So intimately bound together are all the links of society that this calamity, which neither we nor our fathers knew, strikes not only the immediate sufferers, but all

who have themselves and their families to maintain. Closed markets, a general paralysis of business, the greatest risk and uncertainty in all buying and selling, even in keeping stock, must be the greatest loss, if not positive ruin, to many; and food at famine price is real want to most, and a serious injury to all. Nor is this all that we may greatly fear or painfully feel. A visitation of cholera is generally expected by medical authorities in the ensuing summer; and who can tell when and where it shall begin, and when and where it shall end? How dark, too, and gloomy are the signs of the times! We have lost a veteran statesman who, with the support and confidence of almost all political parties, and endowed with a wonderful union of sagacity and firmness, held the helm of government during a most trying period, and, humanly speaking, preserved us from the misery of being even now at war. Popery is advancing at a rapid pace, and all the more surely as the eyes of most seem blinded to its progress. A large number of the clergy are Papists at heart, and by accustoming their congregation to Popish ceremonies are gradually paving the way to a fuller development of Papal doctrines and observances. In the House of Commons, any motion which tends to expose its practices or check its progress is so coughed down, or laughed down, or counted out, that few members have the moral courage to speak in favour of it or support it. Ireland has just escaped the breaking out of a wide-spread conspiracy, which, but for the good hand of God, might have issued, as others have done before, in a fearful massacre of the Protestant population, avenged as it would have been by a fearful retribution.

When we turn from the world to the church, little that is pleasant or hopeful meets the eye. The Lord is taking home or laying aside his servants, and few seem raised up in their place to blow the trumpet with a certain sound, stand on the battlements of Zion, or feed the flock of slaughter. In churches there is much strife and division, little conversion work going on, and a general apathy seems to brood over most congregations, even where sound doctrine is preached and experimental truth contended for.

But it is time to draw to a close. Through mercy, all is not thoroughly or totally dark. The Lord has always had, ever will have, a seed to serve him. Thus, with all these fearful and gloomy prospects we hope, nay, fully believe, that he has still a goodly number of those who fear and love him in this land. For them we labour, to them we here address ourselves; and if the God of all grace be pleased to crown with his blessing, through the present year, what may drop from our pen or appear in our pages, to him in his Trinity of Persons and undivided Unity of Essence must be ascribed all the praise, and honour, and glory.

Your affectionate Friend and Servant,

THE EDITOR.

THE same spirit of faith which teaches a man to cry earnestly teaches him to wait patiently; for as it assures him the mercy is in the Lord's hand, so it assures him it will be given forth in the Lord's time.

—*Mason.*

THE REIGN OF KING JESUS.

“And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly.”—ISA. xxxii. 3, 4.

HITHERTO I have dwelt upon the description of spiritual faith, beautifully given by the prophet Isaiah in the first two verses of my text; now I come to the consideration of a very important practical point, which is set forth in the two remaining verses just read; and this is, the certain fruit and efficacy of that faith, which continually finds shelter and refreshing consolation in the man Christ Jesus.

Do you desire a clear discernment, an ear attentive to the voice and teaching of Christ, a wise and understanding heart, not vain, nor rash, nor hasty, nor unbelieving? Do you desire to have your mouth opened to speak to the glory of God and the instruction of your neighbour? Then observe from the words of my text, that all these blessings flow from that spiritual exercise of faith in the man Christ Jesus; and you can find them in no other way.

Take notice of the expression in the text, that through this faith, “the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, the ears of them that hear shall hearken.” There is the effect of the grace of God. It is given to them to see, it is given to them to hear; and having received this favour from the Lord, they go on unto perfection through the continual exercise of faith.

When Adam sinned, and all his children in him, the change in our nature was such that, however many are unconscious of it, all men are justly exposed to this most fearful curse: “Go, tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; see ye indeed, but perceive not.” (Isa. vi. 9.) Here the hearing and seeing spoken of are not true, but false. They think they both hear and see, yet do neither; and this is the awful judgment of God. Take notice of the words of the Lord Jesus to the same effect in Matthew xiii.: “They, seeing see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.” The hard but needful lesson which these awful words should teach us is to humble ourselves as guilty sinners before God. That there is an unsearchable depth in this subject, I readily admit: “How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.” We are not called upon to penetrate into these depths, but to fall and to be humbled before them. All that we need seek for is grace to fall, and to admit with all our heart that this curse is our due desert, and freedom from it, Christ’s unmerited mercy. Then shall we be led to cry without ceasing, “Lord, let our blindness be removed; let it be given to us to see.”

What, then, remains? Why, that “seeing, our eyes may not be dim; and hearing, we may hearken; i. e., that we may see clearly, and hear with diligent attention. This has reference to the continual quickening and reviving of those who are spiritually taught. The remaining clauses of the text contain also a promise of great blessings. “The heart of the rash shall understand judgment; and

the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly." How great and dangerous an impediment, that rashness of heart is, none fully know but those who suffer from it. Many good men have shown it, but it has been a grievous plague to them. David showed it not once nor twice; he showed it in his conduct, when he suddenly resolved to avenge himself of Nabal, by destroying all his household. But the Lord saved him from this rashness. He showed it in his words, when he said, in his haste, "All men are liars!" And again he confesses in Ps. xxxi.: "I said, in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes!" But the Lord in that very extremity appeared for him, and delivered him from this rashness. It is a great blessing that there is a promise on record for the benefit of these rash ones. They shall "understand judgment," and that even in their "heart."

There is another kind of "impotent men" continually found in the church of Christ, and that is, persons who cannot speak plainly. Isaiah calls them "stammerers." There is a want of clearness in their hearts, and so they are afraid of speaking clearly. Sometimes they are encouraged to hope. Then they are so overpowered by temptations that they dare not avow their hope. This is a painful condition. Sometimes, indeed, it is owing in part to a holy trembling before God, but very often there is great fault in it, which it will be a mercy to be made to feel and deplore deeply, and earnestly to groan for deliverance from it. If there be, (as here in Isaiah there is,) a promise that such impotency shall be healed, those who are spiritually honest, yet thus infirm, will seek and cry that they may lay hold upon it, and be led to take the ready way to find the fulfilment of it. "I believed," said the man after God's own heart, "therefore have I spoken." This is true in every degree of intensesness. "I believed *very firmly*, therefore have I spoken *very clearly*."

I desire to lay much stress upon each of these marks of weakness and infirmity in the church of Christ. Christ's church is like the pool of Bethesda of old. It has many porches, full of impotent folk, waiting to be healed. Here Isaiah collects such together; those who are dim-sighted, those who are hard of hearing, those whose hearts are rash, and those who are slow of speech and of a slow tongue. Now he gathers them together, that he may preach the gospel to them; "to the poor the gospel is preached." All must become poor in their own feelings, all must be made willing and desirous of receiving Christ's bounty very freely. If *one* of these marks of infirmity does not in a particular manner appear to ourselves to be ours, doubtless another will.

Now when Christ will show mercy, he makes us keenly and painfully sensible of our need, he deeply humbles us for our own vanity and self-conceit, he makes the first the last.

In discoursing upon the former verses of my text, I dwelt upon the sin of self-righteousness, how earnest we must all be that the Lord may keep us from attempting to remove our fears by good works, instead of by coming as lost sinners to Jesus. I now go

further, and say that it is a certain truth that the reason of this is not because good works, or rather real holiness, obedience, and love are not needful; they are the fruit of Christ's divine mediation. The only question is, how we may attain really to them. Our efforts to accomplish them are vain. We attain to the appearance of them only, not the reality of them, by all our efforts and strivings through the law. Therefore the real love and desire for true holiness will lead us to be afraid to the very utmost of this power and dominion of the law. This is the personal conflict of all the saints of God in all ages. Isaiah describes it in my text, and a blessing will be found by us in his words if we can diligently read, mark, learn, and digest them. "Behold," says he, "you dim-sighted and hard of hearing, rash in heart, and slow of tongue, you must begin, in the midst of your infirmities, to look to the man Christ Jesus. You will be pursued and invaded with evils, storms, and tempests; you will be ready to faint for thirst, and be discouraged because of the way, finding dry places and a weary land. Your help will *begin* in looking to the man Christ Jesus; it will *go on* by looking to the man Christ Jesus; it will be *perfected* by looking to the man Christ Jesus. You are men yourselves, and have transgressed the law, and are fallen under its curse. He is a man also, who has fulfilled the law, and borne the curse thereof. You must not expect to find either hiding-place or covert, refreshment or comfort, except through him only."

And now what shall be the *end* of your faith? Why this, that all your maladies shall be healed. You are all plagued with maladies, dimness of sight, deafness, impatience, or a dumb spirit. This faith in the man Christ Jesus will bring you to the healing of them all.

I desire, if the Lord will enable me, to make this exhortation to faith, really practical in our hearts. You will not find it easily, and after you have found it, you will be always apt to miss it again. Sometimes the enemy will try to persuade such as have found it a little that they have never found it at all; and this he does in his policy, for his very next temptation in the heart of such will probably be that there is no such thing to be found.

One thing I believe to be true, and to be worthy of our observation in this matter. Though guilt in the conscience and the wrath of God in consequence feared, would always, except through free grace, stop up our way to this faith and our prospering in it, yet there is another hindrance, less terrible in its appearance, and, therefore, dreaded less; but more insidious, more beguiling, and, therefore, often more destructive. If we may be favoured to trace out this enemy, and to fight against him, we shall find cause to thank the Lord indeed. I have hinted at this enemy before. I will close my discourse by warning you against him again. This enemy is the spirit of bondage and fear submitted to, from an idea that we are not good enough to expect the spirit of liberty and love. We want a liberty whereby we have made ourselves free. The gospel brings a liberty whereby *Christ* makes us free. This kind of

spirit of bondage can never be satisfied. God will not satisfy it, by letting us feel ourselves good enough to obtain a blessing through works. Therefore it craves still, and craves always what it never attains. Yet we are beguiled by it. It appears so good, and pretends to be looking for holiness. We do not find out that it is a deceitful traitor and hypocrite, which must be crucified and mortified, not satisfied; that it is the very evil which the Lord, in his divine allegory, (see Gal. iv. 19–31,) points out by “the bondwoman and her son,” which must be “cast out,” and not cherished. It is born of the flesh; it denies the promise; it mocks the child of promise; if it continue in the house, it will make us servants for ever, yea, and evil servants, but never sons.

Now may the Lord have mercy, and enable us in very deed to fulfil the text, to find the man Christ Jesus a hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, rivers of water in a dry place, and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Amen.

*THOUGHTS FOR THE CHRISTIAN UNDER
TRIBULATION.*

WHEN stern affliction's thorny crown,
Or pain, or sickness weighs thee down,
O think of Jesus on the tree,
And what he suffer'd there for thee!

When cares and troubles much abound,
And trials gather thick around,
Like waves upon a stormy sea,
Then think of sad Gethsemane!

The Christian's way is in the fire,
His path is through the thorn and brier,
He in the furnace must be tried
Till brought out purged and purified.

But think how short your trials be
Compared with vast eternity!
May this give comfort to your soul
When waves of trouble round you roll.

And think how soon you'll reach that shore
Where griefs and sins are known no more!
O ponder this! and may the thought
Give you content to bear your lot.

J. H.

“LORD, what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him! Who hath known thy mind, or who hath been thy counsellor?” “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!” What shall we say unto these things? That God spared not his only Son, but gave him up unto death, and all the evils included therein, for such poor lost sinners as we are; that for our sakes the eternal Son of God should submit himself to all the evils that our natures are obnoxious to, and that our sins had deserved, that we might be delivered.—*Dr. Owen.*

A LETTER FROM THE LATE MR. PYM.

What a blessing: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out;" "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as white as wool." (Ps. cxxx.)

God the Father draws the sinner to Christ by revealing him in his attractions to the sensibly needy and convinced sinner; while Satan drives him to him by his temptations and desperate attempts to make and keep him the subject and slave of his constitutional, indwelling, besetting sins, so that the convinced sinner, made alive to the power of his corruptions, and the impossibility of his withstanding, is driven by Satan's temptations to engage in the warfare of flesh against spirit, and spirit against flesh, and in this way to prize highly every gospel truth, and sustain such a warfare only through faith.

I have been one of the vilest of sinners. "In me, that is in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing," but sensibly all that is evil. Nothing but gospel truth, the truth as it is in Jesus, Jesus as that truth, could possibly avail me anything under this present affliction. I have been the subject of fearful darkness of soul, the hidings of God's face from me as he is in Christ.

I have been in the deepest waters, and have endured a fiery furnace of soul-trial, in which I have been made so acquainted with myself that I need not think it strange, as it seems impossible that I could be saved except by fire, a needs-be existing that I should at this time be in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of my faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearance of Jesus Christ, whom, having not seen, I love; in whom, though now I see him not, yet, believing, I rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of my faith, even the salvation of my soul.

I am deeply convinced and satisfied at this moment that I cannot yet be finally saved unless I am kept by the power of God through faith, and that to this keeping by God's power, through faith, (God's gift,) must be ascribed this my having continued believing under the trials which for so many years faith has been subjected to in me. It is said by John (i. 16) of all born of the will of God, of his fulness, Christ's fulness of grace and truth, all fulness of Godhead bodily, have all we received, and grace for grace; that is, grace answering to the fulness of Christ. We have not grace, but it is in Christ for his people. So that the very first spark of grace in his people comes of his fulness, is supplied from him, and is the same truth as the Scripture declaration: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy."

Eph. iii. 14-19 has been made by the Holy Ghost a most blessed and suitable subject-matter of prayer in me, which I have been enabled to pray most earnestly. So believers, when realising their justification by faith, have peace with God through Jesus Christ their Lord, by whom they have access, through faith, into that state

of grace wherein they stand. In them is fulfilled Rom. v. 3, 4, 5. That love of God spoken of in the prayer in Eph. iii. 17, 18, 19, which, while it surpasseth all knowledge, is in an effectual and influential way apprehended by faith, and the poor sensible sinner is filled with all the fulness of God.

How true: "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast;" "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Thus Christ is all and in all.

How sensible am I at this time of my need of Christ! How blessed am I when I can and am living in faith's realised and sensible dependence upon him! While how awful is my state when this living in a sensible exercise of living faith in Christ is supplanted by the soul-darkness of unbelief, bringing me into the deeps of an all-powerful self-condemnation. It is a great contrast between the enjoyment in experience of the light of life which Christ is in the soul, and the felt darkness of unbelief through the withdrawals and hidings of the light of the countenance of Christ from me. There is a sensible, feeling contrast between the two. While nothing can uphold under the season of this felt darkness, but what attends gospel knowledge in the soul. Then it is hoping against hope, striving against unbelief, to set the gospel in its revelations of Christ and the truth in him against my own frames and feelings; to strive in prayer, looking unto and pleading Jesus.

I wish the Lord's own, to whom I have been enabled to preach from time to time, could have before them all that passes within me.

Elmley, Nov. 6th, 1861.

ROBERT PYM.

A LETTER BY THE LATE MR. HENRY BIRCH.

Dear Hannah,—I confess I have been very negligent in not writing to you before this. I have spent some time this evening in trying to find your last letter, but I cannot find it.

You are not forgotten by me. I hear by Mrs. Slee that your health is not good. Perhaps you will find it advisable to give up your place; but in all your ways acknowledge Him who has fed you hitherto, and he will direct your steps. "Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established." (Prov. xvi. 3.) He was the end from the beginning, and is the best of "counselors," (Isa. ix. 6,) and encourages us in all things, by prayer and supplications, to let our requests be made known unto God. They who are enabled to embrace his dear Son have a privilege known only to sons. He gives them power to plead with him, and his answer is a token that he accepts them in the Beloved.

I have but little time to write, for four days are occupied in procuring food for my flock. I can say that what I set before others I feed upon myself. There is no food that satisfies my soul but the Lamb of God. I thank him I know that he is an all-sufficient portion, and nothing else is.

How are you going on? Do you find refreshings from the Lord? He is everywhere; and if you find him, you are at home; you are at rest, be where you will. This world is a sea of trouble; "but in me," the Lord says, "you shall have peace." Indeed, I know it to be true; for he gives me many sweet intimations of his love, of his nearness to me, so that I walk with him in peace. Christ is the wonderful medium between the Lord and us. This is "the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory." If we look into it, it is transforming. We are changed into the same image, from glory to glory. We experience the truth of the prophet's words: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." The Holy Spirit shows him to our enlightened understanding, and while he does this, spreads his sanctifying influences through the faculties of the soul. I consider what I was born for. I came into this world according to the determinate predestination of God. I was preserved in my state of unregeneracy by him who preserves his elect. I was called according to the determinate counsel of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. He has been with me in many changes, and has brought me through many sore trials. His end and aim is to bring me to himself. The perplexities of this world would cast me down, did I not know his well-ordered covenant, in which his love, his wisdom, his power, his care, his pity, are so conspicuously realised. I have found him, or rather he has found me, a lost sheep, but one of his, therefore known to him. He kindly supplies all my wants, and has done so in a most remarkable manner. He told me in 1805 to "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you;" and he has graciously fulfilled his holy promise.

The Lord's people are a peculiar people, and have peculiar privileges. They are not dealt with as others: "Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable and I have loved thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life." (Isa. xliii. 4.) All their mercies are special, covenant mercies from him who says, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Seek communion, dear Hannah, with this blessed Friend of sinners. Say unto Wisdom, which is Christ Jesus our Lord, "Thou art my sister, and call understanding thy kinswoman." Consider him in the relation of a husband to whom you are married, who has paid the immense debt which you contracted before marriage, and which he honourably paid. The Holy Spirit will, in answer to your prayers, manifest him to you; and then you will say with David, "One thing have I desired of the Lord; that will I seek after, to behold (or rather gaze upon) the beauty of the Lord."

How happy are we who can come up out of the wilderness of this world, leaning upon our Beloved.

Mr. L., one of our members, has been dead some months. He died in peace, and pleasantly disappointed the fears of some. He was laid up for a long time, that he might consider, ponder his path, and turn to the Lord; and after a dreary night the day came. The

Lord will be waited upon and waited for. Be not weary. His love will warm and encourage you.

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” The sufferings of God in our nature are a wonderful mystery of love. How near are we brought to God by the death of his Son! What a true Jacob’s ladder is he! What a union between God and us by that incarnate mystery. I have sweet thoughts about it at times; and when he is hidden I am not at home.

Mrs. S. is in her usual health, and has some refreshings at times; but you know how weak she is, and how low she has been brought. There is a great variety in the household of faith,—a great diversity of experience. Susan is very happy, and very lively and cheerful.

I remain,

Yours, dear Hannah, in the Lord Jesus, our only Friend,
Cranbrook, July 5th, 1849.

HENRY BIRCH.

A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT.

My dear Friend,—I sit down once more to attempt to write a few words to you; and it is under a consciousness of my ignorance and utter inability to advance one word that can be of any benefit to you, unless the Holy Spirit is pleased to grant me spiritual understanding, and power to communicate the same, and to you also the power to receive.

What a helpless, depraved creature man is, even after called by grace! Not a single spiritual breath can be drawn by himself, but as the Spirit of Life is pleased to breathe into and upon him. Just before the dear Saviour of sinners departed out of this world to the Father, it is said that he breathed on his disciples the Holy Ghost, and said, “My peace I leave with you. Not as the world giveth, give I unto you.” And, “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. But ye know him, for he shall be in you, and shall abide with you for ever.”

My dear friend seems to be much afraid of coming out of her trouble or getting rid of her burden the wrong way. But I am bold to say there is no ground for such fears. The Lord wounds in such a way that none but himself can heal that wound, and maketh so sore that none other than his own hands can make whole; and I venture, therefore, to say that so it is, and so it will be, with yourself. Nevertheless, it is not for you to prescribe the method or way in which this gracious work is to be effected.

I was glad to hear of the help and encouragement you experienced through your kind friend Mr. P., and believe that the Lord was pleased to work for you through that medium, and view it as nothing less than a temptation from the enemy to question the genuineness of it: You appear to be looking for some word direct

from the mouth of the Lord, or some conspicuous display of his almighty power, (as I was when in a similar state,) as the prophet Elijah did who looked for him in the whirlwind and the storm, but he was not in either, but, "lo, a still, small voice." The voice of peace is what you want to hear in your conscience, and this voice is heard, and felt too, every time a poor sinner is enabled to draw near to the mercy-seat. There is no coming nigh but by the blood of Jesus: "He hath made peace by the blood of his cross." Now, I do not think you can, with a good conscience, deny that you, at some few seasons at least, however short those seasons may have been, have tasted and enjoyed this peace. Have you not known what it is to have every lust of your base heart subdued, and your whole soul drawn out to the Lord, and to crumble into dust and ashes at his feet? And could you not fain have done as Mary Magdalene, —washed his feet with your tears, and wiped them with the hair of your head? This was what the dear Lord meant by "going in and finding pasture;" aye, pasture indeed, green pastures beside the still waters,—those waters that Ezekiel saw issuing from beneath the threshold of the sanctuary, that reached first to the knees, then to the loins, and afterwards a river that could not be passed over, a river to swim in. And it is added that wheresoever these waters come, the fish live. You are one of these fish whom the Lord has caught, and these waters have, at any rate, come up to your knees; so that the feeble knees have been for the time confirmed, and the fearful-hearted made strong. But then there is a going-out of all this into a painful experience of our nature's evil, and the powerful temptations of the devil. In this way the difference between the joy of faith and the trial of faith is found out. Abraham rejoiced when the Lord made promise to him that Sarah should have a son, and that in him, and in his seed, should all the families of the earth be blessed; and it is said of him that "he was strong in faith, giving glory to God." But after-circumstances show how this was tried, and carnal means employed to obtain a spiritual blessing.

One thing I have frequently observed and am constantly experiencing, and that is, when the Lord left communing with Abraham, he returned to his own place; and who could tell so well as himself what that place was? To say the best of it, it was a state of carnal reason and unbelief. Abraham's faith, therefore, did not "stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

I would, therefore, my dear friend, impress upon your mind that as believers are said to have here no continuing city, but are seeking one that is to come, so there is no continuance in one state of experience. The same changes that the earth passes through that the fruits thereof may be produced and brought forth,—seed-time and harvest, summer and winter, cold and heat, day and night, will not cease while the earth remaineth, according to the covenant made with Noah when he came out of the ark, and a token of which is seen by the bow in the clouds, we expect it will be with our souls. Kent well knew this, and speaks well upon it in the following lines:

“To-day with a taste of his love,
 Jehovah their souls shall expand;
 To-morrow he'll give them to prove,
 The Canaanites still in the land.”

My desire for you is that you may be enabled to ask the Lord to lead you and guide you, and make you willing that he and not you should choose your inheritance. He weighs all the mountains before you in scales, and all the hills of difficulty in a balance, holds all the adverse winds that blow upon your poor soul in his fist, as well as all the waters through which he may be pleased to cause you to pass, in the hollow of his hands; so that, although you are but as a bruised reed, the winds of temptation shall not break you down, as those winds can only come, if I may so speak, just as he is pleased to open his fingers to let them pass through; and the depth of the waters must be according to his pleasure. Fire and hail, snow and vapour, and stormy wind, all fulfil his pleasure.

I have many times sucked much sweetness out of that precious hymn:

“Jesus, at thy command,
 I launch into the deep;”

and particularly that verse:

“Christ is my Pilot wise;
 My compass is his word;
 My soul each storm defies
 While I have such a Lord,
 I'll trust his faithfulness and power
 To save me in the trying hour.”

Had you been a stony ground hearer, the temptations that have come upon you would have caused you to fall away, as it has caused, and as it will cause, thousands; and had your house, or soul, built its foundation upon the sand, the streams which have arisen and the winds that have blown would have brought it to the ground long ago. In order, therefore, that a soul may dig deeper than himself for a foundation upon which to rest for eternity, the Lord the Spirit is in infinite grace and mercy pleased to dig deep into the heart, and thereby sweep away those refuges of lies in which a man will hide as long as he can.

“Search me, O God, and try me,” has been forced through many a heart made fearful of self-deception; but when that sincere request is granted, it is not looked upon as an answer to prayer, but as the consequence of some strange thing having happened to them not common to the children of God. And as the Light himself ushered in darkness, when the Lord came unto his own, (after the flesh,) but his own received him not, the darkness not being able to comprehend the light; so, in like manner, it is with us. The darkness of our unrenewed nature cannot comprehend the light; neither can your natural man nor mine understand the things of the Spirit. God and his work can only be seen and known by his own manifestations. The kingdom is his own, and it is his Father's good pleasure to give it unto a fearing little flock.

Believe me to be, Yours sincerely,

March 8th, 1857.

ROBERT KNILL.

P.S.—There is one thing I would just notice, and that is, the idea of some of those with whom you have been associated, imputing much, if not all, the exercises of your mind to the weakness of your nerves. This clearly shows that they have not passed the same road, or they would well know that such a construction is putting the cause in the place of the effect, and thereby inverting the order of things. There were those who I knew, when in my affliction, wished to persuade me that so it was with me. But my answer to them was, "My distress and trouble produce weak nerves, and not my weak nerves the cause of my trouble;" and this I was, through the goodness of my God, favoured to prove; for, after the Lord was pleased to deliver my soul, my nervous system immediately began to strengthen and to increase in strength; so much so, that I do not think that at any period of my life my nerves were stronger than they have been the last two years. It is constant fear and dread that enervates; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment: "He that feareth is not made perfect in love." Farewell

A LETTER TO A DEPARTED ONE BY A DEPARTED ONE.

My dear Friend and Fellow-Traveller,—Perhaps with me you will be ready to say, "Very slowly, if travelling at all;" but let us look back at nature's darkness, the place in which we were born; how the Lord first showed us and convinced us we were without hope and without God in the world, as the first starting-point, which Bunyan rightly calls the City of Destruction; and, by the goodness of our God, I trust we shall find ourselves far from that country, and without the least desire to return, the Lord having, in his tender mercy, quickened our souls into life, and already brought us through many trials, temptations, and sorrows, after having drunk of the bitter waters of a broken law, and a sin-racked soul, by leading us with weeping and supplication to cry earnestly at a throne of grace for mercy; and do we not feel constrained to say the Lord heard and answered that cry, and raised our drooping hearts to a little hope in his mercy? Hope deferred makes the heart sick, and the little light only seems to open to our view more the baseness and evils of our hearts, and we begin to fear we shall soon sink where hope can never reach us. In this condition we sigh and groan in our complaint, and nothing of all created good can heal the breach which sin has made in our conscience. Such now leave the world and set about to work out a righteousness of their own, thinking thereby to justify themselves before God; but with all their toiling and labour, they find, instead of rubbing out one dark spot, they are just like the poor leper, full all over, and are brought to their wits' end, and know not what to do. All their righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and their comeliness is turned into corruption. Thus the Lord weakens our strength by the way, until, like Israel of old, we fall down and there is none to help. The poor man's heart

is melted because of trouble, and the dear Lord, seeing his strength is gone, and that in his own feelings his is a helpless case, speaks a word of encouragement to his disconsolate mind to this effect: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions as a cloud, and thy sins as a thick cloud." This is a good word, bringing him out of the horrible pit with a lively hope in the mercy of God. Faith and love go out towards and after the Lord Jesus Christ, and the feet are made swift to run the ways of God; for now his ways are ways of pleasantness, and his paths peace.

Thus he is brought to set his feet on the borders of Canaan, and he feels that nothing but the pardoning love of the Lord Jesus Christ, brought home to his heart, can satisfy his vast desires. But instead of this, it may be the Lord withdraws his love, and causes his courage to fail. Unbelief prevails, and he sees himself nothing but one mass of sin and corruption, and is ready to conclude that he must altogether be deceived, and that what he had felt never could come from the Lord. And here he longs for another token for good, that he may not be deceived with anything short of the power of God brought home to his conscience. Then comes the labour and travail of the soul between being brought to the birth, and having put on the ring of everlasting love, by the blood of atonement to his conscience.

With me that labour lasted for three years. During that time I had many a token for good, and many helps by the way; but sometimes the Lord cuts it short in righteousness, calls them into the vineyard, pays them their penny, takes them home to his bosom of everlasting rest, without bearing much of the burden and heat of the day; whilst with me it was otherwise; though I little thought, at the time, I, like Job, washed my steps in butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil, that I should again be taken into the wilderness with little to live upon of that rich provision which only can make glad the city of God; so much darkness, the sun almost a total eclipse, and the wild beasts of the forest coming forth in every direction, running as though they would soon make a full end of me. I find to this day the beasts of the world are nothing to be compared to those in my own heart, being constantly in their company, hearing, seeing, and feeling their malicious rage against the best of all beings; and such, at times, is their power that I tremble through fear that they will force me away with what Hart calls,

"Flood after flood, with mire and mud."

This is a troop that often overcomes God, and makes him obnoxious in his own eyes, and to cry with David, "Mine iniquities are gone over my head, a burden too heavy for me to bear. My wounds stink, and are corrupt, because of my foolishness." And how suitable again the words of David: "Deliver me, O Lord, in thy righteousness, and let me not sink." Many times, I would speak it to the honour of my God, has he brought up my soul from these depths, set my feet upon the Rock, and established my goings; and I have lived to prove what Hart says is true, that "a Christian is not

called to play or sleep, but to fight;" for seldom do I go long but some enemy is near at hand; and if there should be peace a little while, I am constantly upon the look out, and expecting some great trial is near at hand; which often drives me to a throne of grace, to cry unto God most high, who performeth all things for me. "It is by these things men live."

I think I am far from being dead, and yet often afraid my religion will dwindle into nothing, and leave me like a drone bee; but I hope I shall never be content to live upon the old stock, and upon what others have gathered, but still live to prove the Lord's mercies to be new every morning, and his faithfulness to the end of my life, and at last have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of his dear Son, who is my only hope, my only refuge from the windy storm and tempest; and I can adopt the language of the poet, and say,

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee."

May the Lord, in his tender mercy, still keep us by his mighty power through faith unto salvation, and each day enable us to commit our all into his hand, both in providence and grace, and be watching to hear what the Lord will say unto us, for he has promised to speak peace to his people and to his saints; but let them not turn again to folly. This is our only safeguard. The Lord has promised to keep the feet of his saints, and has said none of their steps shall slide: "I, the Lord, do keep thee every moment; and lest any hurt thee, I will keep thee night and day." The Lord well knows our strength is perfect weakness, and our utter inability to do anything that is good, and that if left but for a moment to ourselves, it would be a moment too long; but what condescension of the Most High that he takes up his residence in the hearts of such poor sinners by the indwelling of his Spirit, and then works in us both to will and do of his own good pleasure. This made the prophet to say, "He will ordain peace for us, for he has wrought all our works in us."

Now, dear friend, I have gone on to some length, but desire it may not be in vain, but be in some small measure owned and blessed of God, who ordereth all things after the counsel of his own will.

It seems a day of small things with the church, especially with me; yet I believe if my heart deceives me not, the Lord has not left off to be gracious, but that he still condescends, from time to time, to quicken me in his ways, and draw out my heart towards him. To have assurance and standing in the church of God and a lifeless soul, is of all things most to be deplored; and this the Lord complains of in the Laodiceans, who said they were rich and increased in goods, &c., but knew not they were poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked. May the Lord never lay this to our charge, but may we be found amongst that number that came out of great tribulation, and who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. We are all fast hastening out of time, and know not what a day may bring forth. We daily see in the midst of life we are in death, and whether in the first,

second, or third watch, may we be found ready with our lamps trimmed and our lights burning. These things with me, at times, are solemn things. Knowing, from a weak body I must soon put off this tabernacle, with all its trials and cares, I can sometimes adopt the language of the poet, and say:

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

And now, dear friend, I shall conclude, hoping, if it be the Lord's will, this may find you in good health of body, and a soul prospering in the things of God, which is the only thing worth living for. May the Lord give us faith, feelingly to say with Paul, “Whether I live or die, I am the Lord's.

Yours in the best of all Bonds,
Brighton, June 28th, 1864. JAMES FARRANT.

[The above letter was written to the late Mr. Grace, who gave it to us. The writer, not long after he had sent it, was called away, dying after a short and severe illness.—ED.]

A LOVE VISIT.

My dear Friend, and afflicted Brother in the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath loved you and given himself for you.

But you may say, “Are you sure of that?” Well, I can feelingly say before the Lord that my soul has been knit to yours now for many years. You are never long out of my mind and memory. I seldom fall upon my knees but you are brought before me; and I seldom enter the pulpit but your case is brought into my mind; so that my soul tries to ask the dear Lord to restore you to your usual health and strength, that you may resume your pulpit-labour again.

I could not go to see you during my engagement in London, for want of time, and I found travelling very trying through the frost and snow; but I wanted to see you, because I had some good news to tell you from a far country; but I must communicate a little of it to you by letter.

In the first place, I had been very much tried for some weeks in my mind about many things, and out of the pulpit my soul was left in a dead, hard, cold, and barren condition. The Lord favoured me with life and liberty in the pulpit; but in a short time afterwards my soul sank into a dead, dark, and confused state again. I was often led back to see how the Lord favoured me in gone-by days out of the pulpit; and now I seemed left without life or feeling, desire or prayer; and faith and hope were at a very low ebb. Thus my mind was much perplexed and my soul much cast down, at times, and I seemed to have no spirit of hunger or thirst left within my heart; but on Wednesday evening, the 18th of January, I was led to speak a little from these words: “But we all, with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the

same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Next morning the text came fresh upon my mind with some sweetness, power, and savour; and as I was thinking it over, the Lord Jesus broke in upon my soul with his mighty power and love; so that all of a sudden my heart and mind were carried away into heaven by God the Holy Ghost. The Lord Jesus was opened up to my soul, and my interest in his love, blood, and righteousness was opened up within my heart. The gates of righteousness were open in heaven, and the door of hope and the door of faith were opened in my soul; and the Holy Ghost poured into my heart the oil of joy, love, and praise, until my cup was full and ran over. The sweet scriptures were broken up within my soul, so that I had nothing to do but to eat and drink the precious gospel of the Son of God. The power of it enlarged within my soul, so that I could not keep it from my dear wife; she thought I was going to die, and I thought so too.

This took place about half-past nine o'clock in the morning of the 19th of last month, near to the spot where I am now sitting. It remained with me all that day. My heart was broken, and my soul melted into nothing before the Lord, and the sweet tears of peace and joy came up out of my heart so freely and so fully that I could not see out of them. I saw and felt myself nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity before him. What self loathing and self-aborrence there was in my heart before the Lord! I could not abase myself low enough, nor make myself little enough. I left home the next day for Hitchin, with my soul full of peace and joy in believing.

On the Saturday morning we left Hitchin for London, and I had not been in the railway carriage many minutes before the Lord Jesus broke in upon my soul again. The Holy Ghost led me into him by faith. His glorious countenance was lifted up upon my soul, and my heart was so enlarged, and the book of Solomon's Song was so sweet and precious, I held communion with the Father in and through the Son and by the Holy Ghost. O what language the Holy Ghost indited in my heart! My soul desired to live as holy as God is holy; and certain I am that the power of the Holy Ghost, felt and enjoyed in the child of God's heart, produces the same fruit in the soul, and in the life, movements, actions, dealings, and conversation of the believer which the precepts of the gospel set forth. The precepts of the gospel cannot be obeyed in any other way nor by any man on earth, but by him whom the Holy Ghost anoints with divine power and living faith. This, my dear brother, your soul has learned experimentally again and again. What can melt or move such a hard and rocky heart as mine but love and blood to holy obedience before the Lord, by the actings of living hope and living faith centering in and through the precious atoning blood of the Lamb? For without faith it is impossible to please God.

The Lord help you, my dear friend, to go on in your good work, and may he bless your soul in it, and give your heart a powerful anointing with his holy oil. O what a mercy that the Lord hath

put your soul and mine among the children, and that we are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; and O what a salvation it is to save such a sinner as I!

Yours very affectionately,
Godmanchester, Feb. 7th, 1865.

T. G.

A FRIEND LOVETH AT ALL TIMES.

My dear Sir,—I desire this evening to write a few lines to you, and do hope that the dear Spirit will teach me what to say; for I am sure without such a teacher, and such a guide, I shall be nothing better than sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. I found and still find that without the Holy Ghost I can do nothing.

What an unspeakable mercy, then, it is to have the Holy Spirit given to us, to instruct us in the way we should go! I stand more in need of the Spirit's power than ever to put me right, and to keep me right; for every day and every hour of my life do I find something going wrong within me, and wonder how such a vile monster as myself can have any part or lot in the mercy of God. In my own feelings I am more fit to be cast into outer darkness; and I do believe if such were my eternal doom I could say that God is holy, just, and good. O how long-suffering is the God of all grace to me, a hell-deserving sinner, who rebels against him a thousand times a day. Really, I think my wretched heart is worse than any other man's, for it is continually oozing up and teeming forth all manner of sin and wickedness. And how full of meaning are the words of the prophet on this head: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" My soul answers, "None but God." It is he by whom all actions are weighed; for he searcheth the heart and trieth the reins of the children of men.

But, notwithstanding my heart being so full of sin, and so rebellious, there are other desires springing up from time to time, which make me inwardly cry and sigh to the dear Lord for a sweet manifestation of his pardoning love and mercy; and though, with Jeremiah, "I have seen affliction by the rod of his wrath," yet hath he not given me over to death; and though he hath caused me to walk in much darkness, so that I could not find him on either hand, yet hath he been in these sore trials a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, and one that loveth at all times. Blessed be his dear name, he is a God nigh at hand, and not afar off; and, though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion.

O what a compassionate God I found him to be to my poor soul a short time ago in my room. How he condescended to listen to the poor breathings of a feeble worm! How long we were in communion I cannot say; but I never in my life poured out my soul with more freedom. It was as though the Lord himself had come down to me, and made everything around as holy as he is holy.

These precious visits break my hard heart and melt my benumbed soul; and at these times I can say there is none so precious to my soul as the Lord the Lamb. He is the chiefest amongst ten

thousand, and the altogether lovely. O what a very precious gift is the Only-begotten Son of God to a poor sinner like myself; and I do think there never can be a better meeting than the meeting together of a broken-hearted sinner and a broken-hearted Saviour. How true it is that

“Sinners can say, and only they,
How precious is the Saviour.”

Blessed be his spotless name, he has not forgotten to be gracious unto me; he comes from time to time and quiets the murmurings of my rebellious heart. I always know when he pays me a visit, by the calmness which is produced in my mind. There is such stillness, and everything is so quiet, that it is like heaven upon earth; but I need not enter into details, for I am quite sure thou hast felt the same in thy soul many times.

There is one thing which I always take notice of, and that is, when I have a blessed visit paid me by the Lord the Lamb, I always like to be alone with him; I never want any one to be within hearing; for I am so very rude, if rude you can call it, that I talk with him aloud, just as a man would talk with his friend. And O what a number of things we talk over. I tell all my complaints, all my sorrows, and all my troubles. He listens to me very attentively, and his compassions flow out so tenderly towards me that they break my heart and melt my soul; and they do it so effectually that I am sure it is my Beloved who is visiting me.

O, my dear Sir, what should you and I do without this kind Friend and Benefactor helping us out of all our troubles? We could not in any way help ourselves. At least I am sure I could not; for I have tried in my late troubles to help myself in a variety of ways, but never could; and not until everything of my own had failed me and given way, did I call upon God to help me. When everything was gone, and I was left destitute, then my soul was melted because of trouble, and then I cried unto the Lord, and he saved me out of my distresses. He sent his word and healed me; and a precious healing it was, too, for even every running sore was mollified with ointment; and the Lord gave me this promise above all others, that he would help me. If I were to give you an account of the many things which the Lord has blessed me with in this last six months, you would say that he really had helped me. I may say that I have had no lack in things temporal, for the dear Lord raised up a friend for me, who has very kindly done for me what I wrote to you about some months since. What a great boon it is! How good the Lord is! I say the Lord is good, for I have proved him to be so, and have tasted his goodness very many times. Well might the Psalmist say, “Who is a God like unto our God?” And I am sure there is none like him in all the earth; for whatever friends we may have upon earth, they are all very well as far as the Lord makes use of them; but the best of earthly friends are subject to changes, and it cannot be said of them that they stick closer than a brother; but in the Lord we have a true Friend. O that I knew more of him! What a poor short-sighted creature I am! Unless he be always

leading me like a little child, I am going astray into forbidden paths of forgetfulness. I cannot keep in the right direction one moment of myself. I stand very much in need of the teaching of the Spirit of all truth to lead me on through this wilderness world; for without the Spirit's guidings I get into such a maze and into such a labyrinth that there seems to be no way out. I am now sensibly brought to the conclusion that, unless we are living under the sweet influences of the blessed Spirit, our consciences are contracting fresh guilt, or, I might say, we are bringing guilt upon our consciences, which, if it works rightly, will make us inwardly groan and sigh to the Lord for a fresh application of his pardoning love and mercy to be applied with divine power to our souls.

O what a number of times does my soul stand in need of that efficacious blood to cleanse me from all sin; for I am such a sinner; and, as dear Gadsby says,

“Sins as black as hell I find
Are rising up against my mind;
And Satan does not spare to say,
I have quite mistook the way.”

And if my Lord is gone from me I believe him, and think that I am nothing better than a self-deceiver. But how this pleases the devil, and what sad havoc does he make in my soul at these times! When it is sunk fathoms deep in sin, he appears to gain the ground fast, and victory with me hangs in doubtful scale, and then I am so handled I seem to be like one that is paralysed. My faith and hope are, as it were, motionless; no activity whatever; no taking up the sword of the Spirit and fighting manfully against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Then, again, if He comes who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, what a rising up to meet him do I find in my soul! Faith rises up immediately, and says, “Come in, thou blessed of the Lord. Why standest thou without?” And a blessed coming together it is too. Faith, hope, and love are all combined to make ready for such a guest, and the language of my soul to the Lord is,

“Drive the old dragon from his seat,
With all his hellish crew.”

Satan falls back while the Lord communes with me from off the mercy-seat, peace and pardon are sealed home to my soul, and the Lord extends his love like a river into the vitals of my heart; so that I begin to lift up my head and rejoice in the Lord with unspeakably great joy.

Now, when the dear Redeemer comforts me in this way, I find it a thing impossible for me not to love him with all my heart. I feel such love flowing out of it towards him, which before I never could have thought dwelt within me. These precious times, how seasonable they are! How they lay everything in the dust of an earthly nature, and exalt the Lord the Lamb above everything; and how they assure us that the Lord is on our side; and if he be on our side, who can be against us?”

But my pen has run on, my soul has been warm, and love has flowed out towards you and towards your dear Lord and Muster, so

that I have written more than I intended. I hope you will pardon what is amiss. As it sprang up, so I have written.

I have been alone this evening, though not alone. The Lord, I trust, has been with me.

Hoping you and dear Mrs. G. are quite well, and walking at large with the King of kings,

Yours in love,

May 21, 1865.

E. F.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN A FATHER AND A SON.

My dear Father,—Although I have not seen or heard from you for a long time, I can assure you I have often been present with you, believing also that I was not forgotten of you. The contents of yours gave me much satisfaction, for which I desire to be thankful; but how shall I answer it? If I were an equal, or had the like experience of deliverances and mercy too, I would gladly shout Victory also. You will perhaps say, "My warfare is not over yet." True; but I believe my father can at times rejoice in the certain prospect of being at last more than a conqueror. Most gladly would I say so too, but I fear to presume. (Ps. l. 16.) This follows me closely; so much so that I dare not open my mouth. I know, at least I so believe, that the hand of a kind Providence has followed me all my days, and has appeared repeatedly on my behalf, and, as I hope, in answer to prayer, although I have not been long nor am I now without some obstacles in this matter, and often subject to dreadful anticipations of the future; yet feeling daily more or less that anything short of hell is a mercy to me, I am constrained to offer my poor tribute of praise; and the constraint is powerful at times, because you experience "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion and fellowship of God the Holy Ghost," now and for ever. Amen.

Yours affectionately,

April 14th, 1824.

J. B.

My dear Son,—In answer to your letter I believe there is hope in Israel concerning these things. As to what you say of Ps. l. 16, I believe an enemy has done this, because he has not referred you to the preceding verses, and the verses that follow after, which I think you will do well to consider; and may it please God to show you the difference between those that fear the Lord and those that fear him not, so that you may be enabled to offer him praise who has made the difference; that your conversation may be ordered aright by your mouth being in the dust, and the Lord's name alone being exalted for showing you the salvation of God. You acknowledge the kind providence of God towards you and your unworthiness of it, for which you are sometimes constrained to offer a poor tribute of praise; and I am happy to see your earnest desire is for covenant mercies. What is recorded in Gen. xv. 2, is an earnest desire in Abraham, and the Lord granted it to him, though he kept

him long in suspense; and it is written for our encouragement. The Lord never did say to any of the seeking seed of Jacob, Seek ye my face in vain, and for our encouragement to pray it is recorded in Luke xi. 1-14.

You say you are persuaded of the reality of these things, and seek for them; but they are covenant blessings. Then comes Psalm l. 16, as before mentioned. I tell you again, I believe an enemy hath done this, for an earnest seeking of these things is a covenant blessing; and I believe none but those that are in the covenant ever do seek the Lord with all their heart. I know by experience: that when a sensible sinner is earnestly seeking his interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, the devil will muster all his forces against him; but, nevertheless, he that has begun the good work will carry it on through all opposition. You say, however, though faint, you hope to pursue; and may the Lord help you to be a wrestling Jacob, and a prevailing Israel. Amen.

It is written: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, even he shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty;" and it is likewise written: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant." Now I believe the secret place of the Most High is the Covenant of grace, and this is the stability of my soul, the everlasting love of God in Christ Jesus, chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and revealed to me in time by the blessed Spirit taking of the things of the Father and the Son, and revealing them unto me, viz., the Father's love, and the Son's redemption; and if thy heart is set upon this, and thou art seeking earnestly after it, this is a covenant mercy, and thou wilt surely prevail; for it is written: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

Now, my dear son, may it please the Lord to bless you and yours, if it be his blessed will, with a saving knowledge of an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen and Amen.

Your very affectionate Father,

July 18th, 1824.

J. BRIANT.

IN ALL OUR AFFLICTIONS HE WAS AFFLICTED.

My dear Brother,—On reading your note, I find you are walking in the way of those that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb; and if we are blessed with a good hope in him who is the way, &c., he will afford us that strength, patience, and resignation that our souls need, and so sanctify our afflictions as shall bring praise to his holy name, and cause us to say it was good for us to be afflicted. May we see his hand in all our trials, seek resignation and submission, and bless the hand that hath appointed them, remembering that in all our afflictions he was afflicted.

Is it not in this way he often reveals his secrets to our souls, and makes himself precious as the good Physician, and as a Brother born for adversity, seeing that tribulation worketh patience, patience

experience, and experience hope, and that hope maketh not ashamed, and all through the love of Jesus coming to our souls, by the power of the eternal Spirit revealing to our hearts that love is inscribed upon them all? Thus may we come out of tribulation with our souls washed in the Redeemer's blood, and singing, "Salvation unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever."

I hope he will so sanctify your trouble to your souls, as will bring a revenue of praise to his great name.

I have the dyspepsia, and have been confined to my house nearly six weeks, and do not know how long it may please the Lord to continue it; yet I want to see his hand and realise his presence in it, that I may be obedient to his will in all things.

Yours in Christian Bonds,

G. K.

THE POOR MAN'S CRY.

THE poor and the needy, whom Jesus hath bless'd, (Luke vi. 20.)
 Are hungry and weary, with no place of rest; (Gen. viii. 9.)
 Distressed by Satan, dejected to death, (1 Sam. i. 6, 10.)
 For fear they are children in whom is no faith. (Deut. xxxii. 20.)
 Say they, "If the Saviour had suffer'd for me, (Gen. xxv. 22.)
 I'm sure my behaviour more holy would be; (Rom. vii. 23, 24.)
 And then these sore trials which press me all round, (Jude vi. 13.)
 Hope counts them denials, and sinks to the ground. (Acts xxvii. 20.)
 "His people I read of, but none are like me; (Ps. cv. 19.)
 They get what they've need of; their safety they see; (Cant. ii. 6.)
 But I am so sinful, so foolish, and base; (Prov. xxx. 2, 3.)
 His gifts I've abused, and slighted his grace. (Luke xv. 13, 14.)
 "My prospects are blighted, my fond hopes are gone; (Ezek. xxxvii. 11.)
 My soul is benighted, oppressed, forlorn; (Prov. xix. 7.)
 Encompass'd with briers, and pierced with thorns, (Ezek. xxxviii. 24.)
 The bulls and the liars, that push with their horns." (Ps. xxii. 12;
 Isa. xlv. 25.)
 Dear friend, let me stop thee; and hear what I say. (Mal. iii. 16.)
 It perhaps will relieve thee until break of day. (Cant. iv. 6.)
 I know thy distresses; I've been where thou art; (Prov. xxvii. 19.)
 No human caresses will comfort impart. (1 Sam. i. 8;
 Esth. vi. 11.)
 Our friends, who have never been exercised thus, (2 Sam. xviii. 22.)
 Do often endeavour to lead and teach us. } (2 Sam. xviii.
 Sincerely they tell us 'tis all for our good, } 28, 29.)
 And fain would compel us to act as they would. (Mark x. 48.)
 But one who has never been cast in the sea (Ps. lxxix. 2.)
 May think what a swimmer, if tried, he should be. (Matt. xx. 22.)
 Alas! How mistaken he quickly might prove; (Jonah i. 17.)
 Each nerve might awaken, but downwards to move. (Jonah ii. 6.)
 Poor Peter will teach us that Jesus alone (1 Pet. i. 18, 19.)
 Must save and release us, or else we shall drown. (Matt. xiv. 30.)
 'Tis more than good counsel we need in this case; (Luke x. 30.)
 'Tis free and 'tis powerful, invincible grace. (Luke x. 34.)
 And the Lord whom we trust will surely appear, (Luke xviii. 6, 7.)
 Though our foes mock & boast, & we sink with fear; (Neh. iv. 1-3.)
 Then let us hang on him by night and by day; (Ezra viii. 22.)
 If ever we're saved, this must be the way. (Acts iv. 12.)

THE ETHIOPIAN.

FEBRUARY 1, 1866.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

FEBRUARY, 1866.

MATT. V. 8; 2 TIM. I. 9; ROM. XI. 7; ACTS VIII. 37, 38; MATT. XXVIII. 19.

I WILL SING OF MERCY AND JUDGMENT.

MY habit is to read a chapter every morning before going forth to follow my earthly calling, not only in a way of duty, but at times with a desire that something I read may take hold of my heart, and form a subject for my morning's meditation, that I be not altogether swallowed up with my business and the things of this poor dying world; for I painfully know that "to be carnally minded is death." I trust also I know something of the sweetness of that secret, the enjoyment of a spiritual frame. But, alas! How many are my failures, how little my success! How often I read and know not what I read; and how often my meditations are nothing but "vanity and vexation of spirit." I return to my house, bowed down with guilt and shame, and say within myself, "What a poor, worthless, empty wretch I am! How I have spent this morning, with every opportunity (being alone) of meditating, praying, and seeking the Lord, and yet have scarcely had one gracious thought." But, thanks be to God, it is not always so. I am sometimes favoured in this matter; so in spite of all my miscarriages, I follow on in hope.

On March 3rd, 1865, I was particularly favoured in this privilege of seeking God in his word, in reading this verse: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." (1 Pet. i. 3.) The first thought that struck my mind was this: "What a wonderful book is the Scriptures! How full! How much in few words! How all blessed truth is brought forth in them, all error kept out! Blessed be the God, yes, the *God* of Jesus Christ. My soul seemed to have in this blessed truth such a view of that infinite condescension of Him who was the mighty God taking into union with his divine Person our nature, and in that nature, as God-man, to humble himself even to *need* a God to go to; (Ps. xl. 17;) and in part for this, that he might know in our nature, as a suffering Head, the needs and wants of his poor suffering members here below. Hence it is written of Him: "We have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the *feeling* of our infirmities," &c. O that

word "*feeling!*" As God, he could have known all things without this; but in his humiliation, he deigned to know them in a way of *feeling*. So he is a sympathising High Priest. What a precious truth! What an encouragement for poor sinners to come unto him with all their needs, necessities, and infirmities! How sweet is sympathy in the Christian path! The widow can shed her tears with the widow, the bereaved with the bereaved, the afflicted with those in affliction; but how far these earthly figures come short to set forth that ever-flowing love and pity which fills the heart of Jesus, now enthroned on high, for his children here below. "In his love, and in his *pity*, he redeemed them, and bare them and carried them all the days of old." I felt that had he not condescended to this, but in his life on earth lived a life of power only, how could it have been said of him, "In all their afflictions he was afflicted?" Though God as well as man, he lived a perfect life of faith and dependence on his heavenly Father. It was hurled in his face, even on the cross, that he trusted in God; and in this life of perfect holiness, perfect obedience, perfect faith, perfect sufferings, perfect love, did he fulfil God's holy law, magnified and made it honourable, and wrought out that robe of righteousness in which his redeemed will shine to all eternity. It is a great mystery; but where reason is lost, faith can receive, believe, and enjoy. Hart says:

"The strength of God is owned by all,
But who his weakness knows?"

"And, *Father!*" Blessed truth! My first thoughts were: "What and where are those who deny this?" I could say, "My soul, come not thou into their secret;" but I could say, "Peter, my soul come into thine;" for it is sweet and precious. Take away the eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ, and you must take away the eternal Fatherhood (if I may coin a word) of the Father; and in so doing he would be robbed of his chief, if not all his glory, in the gift of his dear Son. For when did he give him? Surely from all eternity. Then what was he when he gave him? His dearly-beloved Son. "Unto us (the church) a Son is given." My thoughts were carried to the offering up of Isaac by Abraham; and that which was so well pleasing in the sight of God was, that he did not withhold his dearly-beloved Son Isaac; and how it was typical at least of the glory and honour due unto the Father, who gave for a sacrifice his dearly-beloved Son; and in this cannot the church say, "Now I know that thou lovest me, because thou hast given for our salvation thy dearly-beloved Son?" Although I had read so much on this subject, and fully approved what I had read, yet I never so beheld by faith the blessedness of that truth, the eternal Sonship, nor experienced such soul-aversion to the error of its denial. It appeared to me as if these men of error would heave from its place this foundation stone of our most holy faith; but it is beyond their power; for "the foundation of God standeth sure." Now I know these things have been set forth very, very far beyond my poor way of speaking of them, as they came into my soul warm from the altar; and whilst

I was in a sweet frame, meditating on them with life and soul enjoyment therein, it entered my mind that I should like to give my feeble testimony to the honour of his precious name, who, I trust, has saved me from eternal ruin, by giving some account of what he hath done for my soul. But I was afterwards tried about the matter, so I made it a subject of prayer for the Spirit's guidance, and my heart failed me in the thing, fearing lest my object was the exaltation of my worthless self to seek some reputation in the church, &c. Under this exercise, on the 10th of March, as I was turning over the leaves in the Bible, as I do that some word may catch my eye that suits my feelings, I read these words: "I will stand upon my watch." They suited my exercised state of mind. I read on with feeling, until I came to these words: "Write the vision." As I had been so exercised whether I should write or not, there was that peculiar voice in them that I could not put away; yea, I rather felt, "Come what may, now I must do it."

I have been a reader of the "Gospel Standard" for about a dozen years, and can say with real soul profit; and I have viewed the various contributors to it, and their exercises and experiences there recorded, as so many pilgrims casting their mites into the treasury; and why not I? As I had received comfort from others, it might be the Lord's will that some poor, out-of-the-way, lost sinner might at some future time receive a little comfort from my case.

I shall pass by my early convictions, and come at once to what took place in my soul in November, 1854. I had been for about two years striving to gain the mastery of my sins, and work out some righteousness of my own, that God might be pleased with me, and take me to heaven; but, with all my striving, I utterly failed, and always came short of what I aimed at; so one day I, in a sense, took stock of my religion, reckoning up what I hoped I had; for I seemed come to a stand-still. I could get no further, and said within myself, "Here I am; no better yet, no better than I was a year ago." What to do I knew not; for in my extreme ignorance I felt as if the Lord was waiting for me to do my part, which was to arrive at a certain pitch of holiness; then he would carry on the work of salvation within me; but I could not do my part. "Well," I thought, "I have convictions of sin, and that is an evidence. I have laid down my earthly prospects for the truth's sake, and that is an evidence. Also I have some love to God and his people, and that is an evidence." So with these good evidences, as I called them, (and so they were,) I concluded that all would be right at last, and I need not make such a trouble of my sins; so determined I would not; for I thought if I could know, perhaps others professing religion are as bad as I, and they do not, neither would I. With this conclusion, the thought entered my mind, "But I have never been pardoned, or delivered. I know nothing about that; and I suppose it is needful before we die, or we shall not go to heaven." I soon silenced these objections thus: "O! With the evidences I have, that is sure to come on my death bed." So I

turned to the course of laying the reins on the neck of my lusts according to my resolution. I have just thought, "O my soul, if I could have cast thee into eternal ruin, I should surely have done it; all praise be to Him who hath said, 'I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.'"

Through mercy, I was not left to go on long in this course, but for a time I was. What extreme hardness I felt. I seemed to have no love or care for anything religious. Prayer, Bible-reading, were all a burden to me in this my terrible course.

The first change from this I can recollect was a feeling of grief and pain, because of my hardness of heart, and unconcern about my soul. I began to be alarmed whether I should end right, as I had concluded; and under the pain of these feelings one night I prayed thus to the Lord: "O Lord, do deliver me from this hardness of heart and unconcern about my soul! Spare me not from the weight of the cross. I am willing to bear it, if thou wilt but bring me into the path that leads to eternal life." I believe it was prayer indeed; for in terrible things in righteousness did the Lord answer me.

Soon after this, a dear friend, whom I afterwards called my mother in Israel, for she was a nursing mother to me in my soul affliction, called upon me, and we talked about the unpardonable sin. She promised me the loan of a "Gospel Standard," containing the account of Francis Spira, which she said was the best account of that sin she knew of, and it was reviewed by the editor. So in a few days I had the Number and read the case. I have not the "Standard" by me, and it being more than 10 years since, I cannot correctly remember the exact words, but I can the effect produced by the editor's words. He spoke of professors building upon shallow evidences, who were not pressing on for a manifestation of pardoning love; who in secret were guilty of some sin,—of drink, adultery, or some uncleanness; and if such had the fear of God in their hearts, they would be brought in soul feeling to the very gates of hell. I seemed to see my portrait at a glance. I thought I answered to it in every description; and that such, if they did not die Francis Spira's death, would go to his portion. O my soul, what a change! I was cut to the earth at a stroke. I felt I was just like those professors, and every rag of hope, righteousness, and religion seemed stripped off me in a moment. I felt I was the most lost, vile, religiousless wretch on the face of the earth; and all I could do was to groan in the bitterness of my soul, "O wretch that I am! What shall I do? What shall I do?" Truly the arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in me, and his hand (of felt wrath) pressed me sore.

In this state, I went to my father's house, and sat silently brooding over my inward pain, until I could keep it in no longer; so I got up and burst into tears, and, trembling from head to foot, in their surprise, my mother said, "What is the matter? Are you ill?" I replied, "No, but I have been reading the Review of Francis Spira,

and find I am like the professors spoken of. I have not been pressing on for parloning mercy; I have no religion that will do to die with." I thrust away all attempts to comfort me, saying it was not for me. I had sinned against light, knowledge, and conscience. I returned home, but not to sleep. I lay tossing about almost all night, crying within myself, "O my sin, my sin, my sin!" I once said, "Lord, have mercy on me;" but I had such a feeling as if the Lord would not suffer a word of mine to enter his ears; so I gave up. My misery was great indeed.

The next day we were threshing corn. I looked at the men; they seemed happy, I only was miserable; yet I felt there was but this difference, they would be lost with their eyes shut, I with mine open. "How much worse is my case than theirs!" How I wished I had no more knowledge than the brute creation about religion; then there might be some hope if my sin had been done ignorantly in unbelief. At night I felt a little easier; but I knew not why, only I could eat a comfortable meal; and for this I was thankful. I was not like Spira yet; and I believe I tried a few words of prayer. I slept until 12 o'clock. On awaking, these words came into my soul, as if with a voice of thunder: "I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God." I immediately rose up trembling all over and sweating with horror and fear. I jumped out of bed and walked about my room in the bitterest distress of soul, wringing my hands for very agony of mind; for thus I interpreted the words: "Ah! I see now I have never sought salvation through Jesus Christ; but such religion as I had was trying to please God the Father, forgetful of that only way, his dear Son; and now Jesus Christ was jealous and full of wrath, and would never forgive me." I now became acquainted with an experience which, up to this moment, I was quite a stranger to, and that was, to know the terrible power of Satan as a roaring lion, seeking to devour the least remaining hope that was in my sin-distressed soul, and also to know what it was for the "enemy to come in like a flood." How expressive is the word "flood" to those who have felt Satan's power in that character. I had been finding fault with Mr. Godwin for speaking in the way he did about Satan. I thought, "Why, people will say we talk to the devil and he to us." Poor fool that I was. I now had to know it for myself, for in this hour of bitter soul desertion, he came in indeed like a flood, and told me that I had turned my back on Jesus Christ, that he had turned his back on me, and that he neither would nor could save me; but if I would give up hoping in him, he (Satan) would cease to terrify me. Well could I understand the hymn some time after:

"Does Satan tempt thee to give up,
No more in Jesus' name to hope?"

I felt I could not comply, though I knew not that I had a hope; yet, like Bunyan's Pilgrim, there was a something struggling within to get out on the side farthest from my own house. Satan resumed his attack with double fury, and represented to my soul that mine was just such distress as none were ever saved out of; as my sin had been in secret, my salvation would bring no glory to God like an

open sinner; that God had forsaken me, and I was left in his hands to be destroyed at his pleasure; and he would drive me mad with black despair, and I should die in a madhouse, declaring to all around me that I was lost for ever. Fearing lest all this was true, the distress of this hour of my life I know not how in anywise to describe. I was indeed in a place where two seas met, a sense of God's wrath in his holy law on one side, and the terrible power of the powers of darkness on the other.

In this dreadful state, the first thing that entered my mind, to give the least gleam of hope, was Peter's denying the Lord with an oath. How thankful I was his case was so bad. I even hoped he swore very badly, so that there might be a little hope for me; and also the case of dear Mr. Godwin, who I knew was intending suicide when the Lord appeared for him; so I directly dressed and went to call up my father to take me to Mr. Godwin. I said I wanted to know what he had done against Jesus Christ, if so be, from his case, I could gather any hope that I might be forgiven. Though this was not done, yet I have had great love for that servant of God ever since.

(To be continued.)

A CHRISTIAN'S FAREWELL.

WRITTEN IN A TIME OF AFFLICTION AND IN ANTICIPATION OF DEATH.

FAREWELL to my friends, and farewell to the world;
My anchor is weigh'd and my sails are unfurl'd.
I am now only waiting God's heavenly breath
To waft me safe over the river of death.

Through life's stormy ocean, with Christ for my guide,
His word for my compass, I safely have plied;
Though whirlpools and rocks have around me appear'd,
On the verge of destruction unhurt I have steer'd.

In treacherous calms still protected I've been,
When the enemy lurk'd unsuspected, unseen;
And when whirlwind and tempest have sorely assail'd,
My Anchor of Hope hath my soul never fail'd.

Farewell to my wife, thou sweet soother of care,
I leave thee in sorrow thy troubles to bear;
Yet be of good cheer, for the Lord will provide,
Will be thy kind Shepherd, thy Husband, thy Guide.

For yet a short space, and thy troubles will cease,
And this cottage be changed for the mansions of peace;
Where no sickness can enter, no troubles annoy,
But all will be happiness, triumph, and joy.

Farewell to my children. I bid you adieu !
The shores of eternity rise full in view.
My port is in sight, my short voyage is o'er,
And the place that now knows me will know me no more.

But you will be left to encounter the storms,
And face all life's dangers in various forms.

Take care, ere you venture to cross the rough tide,
To seek for a pilot, your vessel to guide.

O seek for direction to Israel's God,
Who will smooth your rough passage and lighten your load.
No billow can ever your vessel o'erwhelm,
If Christ be your Pilot, and govern the helm.

Farewell to relations, acquaintances,—all;
I am leaving this world of sin, trouble, and thrall.
Be ye also ready; the great day draws near
When you at the bar of the Judge must appear.

Farewell to the Church, my dear brethren in love;
May the dew of God's blessing descend from above,
And the Spirit's sweet earnest, the foretaste of heaven
To you in a mighty abundance be given.

May the kingdom of Satan to ruin be hurl'd,
And the gospel of Christ triumph over the world,
While the heralds of mercy proclaim the blest word
Till all flesh shall behold the grace of the Lord.

O farewell, my friends! I am going before,
And I trust that my spirit to Jesus will soar,
Where, saved by his merit and wash'd in his blood,
My soul shall obtain free acceptance with God.

And now, O my Saviour, give ear to my prayer,
And supply me with strength the last struggle to bear.
Forgive all my sins, my transgressions remove,
And rescue my soul with thy strong arm of love.

O give me a sense of thy pardoning grace;
Descend, Holy Spirit, with mercy and peace,
And whisper that joy which thou only canst give,
And say since Christ lives that I also shall live.

To dwell with the Saviour, to join with the throng
Of the ransom'd in heaven, and sing that sweet song,
"Salvation and glory to God and the Lamb,"
While the arches of heaven re-echo his name.

My disconsolate widow I pray thee to bless;
Supply all her wants and relieve her distress.
May thy grace all-sufficient on her be bestow'd,
And fix thou her hope on her Saviour, her God.

My fatherless children take under thy wings,
And show them the fount where happiness springs.
O lead them to Jesus, that new living way,
And grant that they ne'er from his precepts may stray.

To the Triune Jehovah all glory be given,
By the Church upon earth and the ransom'd in heaven;
The Father, the Son, and the Spirit confess'd,
On earth and in heaven be honour'd and bless'd.

LET a man profess what he will, if his thoughts are generally conversant about earthly and worldly things, he has an earthly and worldly mind; and if his thoughts are conversant about sensual things, he has a sensual and carnal mind; for whatever he may outwardly say, "as he thinks, so is he;" there is the image and likeness of the soul.—
Owen.

A LETTER BY THE LATE G. BROADBRIDGE.

My dear Friend,—I received your kind and welcome epistle of the 11th inst., and must say that I found it to be a word in season to my poor, needy, tried, and tempted soul; for I do at times think that I must give it all up and not meet any more with the Lord's dear people. I fear I am only deceiving them, and myself also, which to me is most awful indeed. In this I am much tried, which makes me cry to the Lord to set me right where I am wrong, and not to let me go on making a profession and meeting with his people, and then at last to hear that awful sentence pronounced upon me, from the lips of that blessed and precious God-Man Jesus, (for I cannot help calling him so now, as I have felt, and found him to be precious to my soul at times, if I have not been deceived by him who sometimes comes, as an angel of light to deceive the very elect,) saying, "Depart from me; I never knew you." O my friend, how this oftentimes makes me tremble from head to foot, lest this should be my lot at last; yet I cannot help crying to the Lord, if he will, to show mercy to me according to his loving-kindness and tender mercy; yes, to one so unworthy; and pardon my sins and iniquities. These are often the breathings out of my heart to the Lord, and that he would let me know if there is mercy for such a guilty wretch as I oftentimes feel myself to be.

Though much cast down, I am not quite destroyed, for the Lord helps me again with a little help. This has come with some sweetness and power: "There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared;" and I hope and trust that I had a little of the fear of the Lord implanted in my heart, by what I felt and enjoyed; for what comes from the Lord leads to him again. I have cried out aloud, "Lord, is there indeed forgiveness and mercy with thee for such a guilty sinner as I am?" "Yes, for thee." O my friend, my heart, which before was as hard as a rock in feeling, was softened, and the tears of gratitude, praise, and thanksgiving flowed down my face. I cannot express the love I have at such seasons felt to Him who suffered, bled, and died for sinners; yes, friend, like you and me, for you know something of this feeling religion:

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

How basely and falsely we are accused by many, who say that we trust in our feelings. They are poor rotten props to trust in, in a time of sore trial and temptation from the enemy of our souls. But true religion is nothing without them. There must be life to produce feeling. The entrance of God's word giveth light; and when that enters into the heart it gives us to see and feel our need of a Saviour to save us from our guilty state, in which we were all plunged by the fall of our first parents. Therefore we dare not trust in our own feelings. No, but in him alone who creates them in us, and gives us faith to look unto him, Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. I only wish that I could have more of those sweet feelings than I have, and for my mind not to be so much taken up about the perishing things of time and sense

Many things my mind wanders upon, which may never come to pass. I often call myself a thousand fools for having such wandering thoughts; but it makes me cry again to the Lord to let my mind be more stayed on him, the Rock of Ages, and set my thoughts and affections more on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. I daily see something around me which tells me that this is not my rest; yes, and I feel it too within me, for it is polluted, and that with sin; which often makes me cry out with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I hope that I can at times go on with him and say, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So that with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." It is feeling these two opposites working together which makes the warfare; a company of two armies, flesh and spirit, always contending against each other. O what a mercy to be delivered safely at last from this warfare by him who conquered Sin, Satan, Death, and Hell, and triumphed over all. He fought the battle himself. "He trod the wine press (of his Father's wrath) alone, and of the people there was none with him; and I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold. Therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me, and my fury, it upheld me."

Hart's Hymn on the Passion has been very precious to me many times:

"Backwards and forwards thrice he ran,
As if he sought some help from man;
Or wish'd, at least, they would condole,
('Twas all they could,) his tortured soul.

"Whate'er he sought for, there was none;
Our Captain fought the field alone.
Soon as the Chief to battle led,
That moment every soldier fled."

Yes, and Peter among the rest, who had just before said unto him, "Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death." O my friend, what are we if left to ourselves? I see myself in Peter, that I should have done the same. So well might Christ say, "Without me ye can do nothing." What a mercy that he did pray for such poor weak and feeble creatures, and "remembers that we are but dust," that "all our springs are in him," and that "all our times are in his hands." Bless his precious name, it is a mercy for us that they are; and that he has a fellow-feeling for us in all our trials, temptations, and afflictions, for he was tempted in all points like unto us, he being without sin, that he might succour them that are tempted.

My friend, I was thinking of you this morning before I was up, and thought I should like to have a letter from you or to write a few lines to you, and the afternoon's post brought yours. I had in the reading of it a sweet melting of spirit, and could not keep the tears from flowing. I was sorry to hear of your illness, but the psalmist said it was good for him that he had been afflicted; yes,

and I believe that you can say the same from the bottom of your heart ; and so can I ; but our coward flesh and blood shrink at it ; nevertheless it is profitable to them that are exercised thereby.

I was glad to hear that the Lord was with you at Leicester, and shone with brightness into your soul, for we often get very dark, dead, barren, and cold. What a mercy to have but one glimpse of the Sun of Righteousness, to shine into and cheer our drooping spirits. Then it is refreshing indeed, both to speaker and hearers.

I felt what you said in yours about being sick and weary of this world, sin, self, and professors, and how glad you would be to leave all behind. I could add my hearty Amen to that ; yet I wish to live my appointed time, as you say. I do long to behold him face to face whom my soul loves ; for he is the chief among ten thousand to me, and the altogether lovely. I do find him precious to my soul. What you said about the Lord's not leaving us in our sins and blood I felt to be a word in season, for I feel that if he had left me he would have been just in so doing ; but I can say that I am one whom thou favourest. (Psalm lxxxvi. 2, *margin*.) Bless his precious name, he never has left me in any trouble, but has brought me through all to the present moment. But, I say it to my shame, I am often afraid how it will be in future troubles if I am spared to live much longer in this vale of tears. Job v. 19 has often been precious to me : "He shall deliver thee in six troubles ; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." I often cry out, "Lord, have mercy on me, and pardon my unbelief."

We go on as usual, and the Lord condescends to meet with us, and gives fresh lifts by the way, or I am sure I should have given up long ago. Bless the Lord, he holds us fast, contending and loving a searching and an experimental religion, feelingly made known in the heart by the blessed Spirit applying it with power to the soul ; so that we may bring forth fruit to the glory and praise of God's grace. This, my friend, is what my soul loves and desires to contend for ; but O how few there are of this stamp in the great bulk of professors in this great day of profession. Truly it is a remnant indeed that must be saved. O that we may be found numbered in the Lamb's book of life,—in that remnant which will be saved with an everlasting salvation.

I was glad to hear what you said about your daughter, and the Lord's meeting with her soul. What a mercy that is, for the parents to see the Lord bringing their offspring into the everlasting covenant ; but a greater mercy for the poor soul brought into the covenant ; yes, my friend, he knows where all his redeemed ones are scattered up and down in this world of sin and woe ; and not one of them will be lost. Though the devil may try his hardest, he is but a chained and a conquered foe.

I shall be glad to hear from you at any time when you feel inclined to write, for my soul loves to hear of the prosperity of Zion, and of any poor souls being brought to know the plague of their own hearts feelingly, and crying to God for mercy.

Remember me kindly to all friends who love a precious Jesus. As Paul I desire, "that they may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death."

And now, my friend, I think I must close this scribble, and hope your patience will not be worn out in reading it. I think I cannot close it with anything better than wishing you and yours the best of blessings which addeth no sorrow therewith; and these words in John's 3rd Epistle, for I feel them in my heart towards you: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

From yours affectionately in the Truth,
Faversham, March 14th, 1850. G. BROADBRIDGE.

"MY SOUL FAILED WHEN HE SPAKE."

BY RICHARD SIBBES, PURITAN MINISTER.

ALTHOUGH the church is said to fail and not to find Christ, yet he is present then with her. For who enabled her to seek him? To explain this there is a double presence of Christ. 1. *Felt*; 2. *Not felt*. 1. The presence *felt* is, when Christ is graciously present, and is withal pleased to let us know it, which is a heaven upon earth. The soul is in paradise then, when she feels "the love of God shed abroad in the heart," and the favourable countenance of God shining upon her. Then she despises the world, the devil, and all, and waxes as if she was half in heaven already. For she finds a presence and manifestation of it, a more glorious state than the world can afford. 2. But, there is a presence of Christ which is *secret*; when he seems to draw us one way, and to drive us another, that we are both driven and drawn at once; when he seems to put us away, and yet, notwithstanding, draws us. When we find our souls go to Christ, there is a drawing power and presence; but when we find him absent, here is a driving away. As we see here in the church and in the woman of Canaan, (Matt. xv. 21,) we see what an answer she had from Christ. At first none, and then an uncomfortable, and lastly a most unkind answer: "We must not give the children's bread to dogs." Christ seemed to drive her away, but, at the same time, he, by his Spirit, draws her to him, and was thereby secretly present in her heart, to increase her faith. When Christ wrestled with Jacob, though he contended with him, yet at the same time he gave Jacob power to overcome him, to be Israel, a prevailer over him. (Gen. xxxii. 28.) So, at the same time, the church seems to fail and faint, yet, there is a secret, drawing power pulling her to Christ, whereby she never gives over, but seeks and calls still after him.

It is good to observe this kind of Christ's dealing, because it will keep us that we be not discouraged when we find him absent. If still there is any grace moving us to that which is good, if we find the Spirit of God moving us to love the word and ordinances, to

call upon him by prayer, and to be more instant, certainly we may gather there is a hidden, secret presence here that draws us to these things. Nay more, that the end of this seeming forsaking and strangeness is to draw us nearer and nearer, and at length to draw us into heaven to himself.

God's people are gainers by all their losses, stronger by all their weaknesses, and better for all their crosses, whatsoever they are. And you shall find that the Spirit of God is more forcible in them after a strangeness, to stir them up more eagerly after Christ than before, as here the church does: for her eagerness, constancy, and instantness, it grows as Christ's withdrawing of himself grows.

Let us, therefore, learn hence how to judge of ourselves, if we are in a dead, lifeless state, both in regard of comfort and of religious performances, whether we are content to be so. If we are not contented, but make towards Christ more and more, it is a good sign that he has not forsaken us, that he will come again more gloriously than ever before, as here we shall see after, it was with the church. He seems strange, but it is to draw the church to discover her affection, and to make her ashamed of her former unkindness, and to sit surer and hold faster than she did before. All ends in a most sweet communion.

We should labour, therefore, to answer Christ's dealings in suitable apprehensions of soul, when he is thus present secretly, though he seem in regard of some comforts and former experience of his love to withdraw himself. It should teach us to depend upon him, and to believe though we feel not comfort, yea, against comfort, when we feel signs of displeasure. If he can love and support me, and strengthen my soul, and show it a presence of that which is fit for me, certainly I should answer thus with my faith: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him," as Job xiii. 15.

IT IS WELL.

My dear Friend,—I received your letter, but have made you wait a long time for an answer. I can assure you I was not altogether surprised at the contents of yours; for I really had for some time past felt a persuasion you were in a low place; and if you had left the chapel I should not have been altogether surprised, for I believed I could see it in your countenance. Yet I expected it would be all right again in the Lord's time. My preaching also, I know, was more calculated to condemn and to cause searching of heart than it was to build up; but I cannot preach what I like; and I know there is as much a needs-be for searching and stripping discourses as ever there is for comforting ones. But what a mercy it is to know both sides of the question in some measure, viz., our misery and God's mercy; our helplessness and God's strength; our darkness and his light; our vileness and the cleansing, healing power and virtue of Jesus' blood.

I was and am truly glad to find by yours that the Lord has helped you once again. These comings and goings of the Lord prove that

he is of one mind, and that none can turn him. I hope you may continue long at his feet, under the sweet influence of his love. It is a sacred spot. Prize it, and pray the Lord to keep you there; and when you lose the sweetness, may you not lose your confidence, but trust him even when and where you cannot trace him. This is well-pleasing to him, because it honours him and puts the crown on his head; and you know he says, "Them that honour me, I will honour."

You ask in yours if you may beg an interest in my prayers. Well, such as they are, you have an interest in them; but I feel as if anybody's are before mine; for I often feel they are not worthy the name of prayers; yet I know the Lord does not look at the words; and this oftentimes gives me encouragement, because I am sure the Christian often prays most when he says least. Yes; the Lord hears a sigh, and a groan is music in his ear. After all is done and said, we must come to this conclusion: "It shall be well with the righteous." The words have gone forth from the lips of eternal truth, and cannot be called back again. And O what a mercy it is for us to say with the poor woman, "It is well." Whether we can believe it or feel it or not, it is well. Yea, when our unbelief is ready to give the lie to all that ever we have known and felt, even then it is well.

May the dear Lord lead, guide, and support you, and hold up your goings in his path, till he brings you safe home; for his name's sake. Amen.

If you feel inclined to drop a line while I am here, I should be glad to hear from you. I hope your mind is still comfortable and stayed on the Lord.

Yours in the best of Bonds,

J. MARTIN.

A TESTIMONY TO A DEPARTED SERVANT OF GOD.

My dear Mr. Grace,—“Let us arise and go up to Bethel, and build an altar there unto the Lord, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went.”

I do acknowledge, with gratitude to the God of all our mercies, the sweet savour, unction, and blessed distilling of the heavenly dew upon my soul, which may be often justly compared to the barren heath or dry and thirsty land. How refreshing, how sweet to feel the spices flow forth; how freely then I can welcome my Beloved into his garden to partake of his pleasant fruits. I allude to the memorable and comfortable season I had yesterday morning under the preached word. If not greatly deceived, it was a special season with yourself, and the fleece and floor were very generally wet; I mean that many plants were watered. It was a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. He that sowed and those that reaped rejoiced together in the Lord. In answer to the home-thrust question you put to your hearers, “How many of you have bended your knees before you came here, and entreated the Lord's blessing

to accompany the word?" I could scarcely forbear answering for myself, "I did." Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." I now feelingly say, "Strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees of thy people, Almighty God, that thy servant's hands may be held up, that Israel may prevail. May thy prayer-books never be missing (your praying people). I earnestly hope you may be spared to us yet a long season, and that much good may be done through your instrumentality, in the name of the Holy Child Jesus."

In a snow storm to-day, that portion came to me with a degree of sweetness: "As the rain and snow cometh down from heaven," &c.; "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it."

Since I last saw you I have known what it is to walk in the valley of humiliation. Happiness is found therein. I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content, notwithstanding the opposite, which much dislikes the way. God does and will lead on in the right way his people to the city of habitation, to the haven of rest, and finally to that glorious place where the wicked shall cease from troubling and where the weary are for ever at rest. I shall be satisfied when I awake with his likeness.

May the Lord support and bless thee. This is the earnest prayer,
my dear pastor, of

Yours sincerely,

Brighton, 11th Feb., 1861.

J. F.

THE LAMB WITHOUT A SPOT.

O MY struggling soul, thou seemst by all forgot;
Yet listen to these gracious words, "The Lamb without a spot."
Amid thy nature's ruin, canst thou forget that hour
When Christ reveal'd this precious truth in his own life and power?

When the law's loud thunder first awoke thee from thy sleep,
Ah, little didst thou know of these monsters of the deep,—
The deep of thy fallen nature, fallen to the very core,
Which so often seems to drive thee on despondency's dark shore.

But the candle of the Lord, shining deeper in thy heart,
Made thee from thyself with the greatest horror start,
Revealing some hidden monster within his secret cell,
Which sank thee almost to despair in thy deserved hell.

'Tis true, sweet words and lovelocks kept thee just alive,
And, against these doubts and fears, Little-faith would sometimes strive.
'Mid the smoke of these corruptions, True Love would raise her head,
Proving to the soul she was not among the dead.

But now the hour arrived when love burst to a flame,—
Beauty for my ashes, and glory for my shame;
A night ever to be remember'd with my latest breath,
When Jesus conquer'd in my conscience the law of sin and death.

Thick darkness seem'd to veil my soul, but the resurrection word
Fell from the lips of Jesus, my suffering and dying Lord:
"I will stain all my raiment;" O words of life and power,
Which fell from his glorious lips in that never-forgotten hour!

Father, Son, and Spirit by the eye of faith were seen;
 While pardon, peace, and godly grief within my heart did stream.
 The mountain of sin and guilt, all buried beneath the flood,—
 Hark again!—those glorious words: “When I see the blood
 “I will pass over thee!” God the Father spake this word of grace,
 Gazing on his beloved Son, my Shield and Hiding-place.
 God the Holy Ghost, the witness of this amazing love,
 Anointing my soul with joy and grief, and the meekness of the dove.

O the ineffable glory, the savour, and the power,
 For ever consecrating that amazing hour!
 Yes, Gower Street, from that hour thou hast ever been to me,
 ’Mid this howling wilderness, a precious sanctuary.

Not the bishop’s consecration, not the outward sign;
 But God’s own consecration for ever thou art mine.
 Though the savour of that hour has never quite gone down,
 Yet I must bear the chastisement, the Father’s loving frown.

The fire and the furnace must purge away this dross;
 But the genuine gold shall never suffer loss.
 Still does the messenger from Satan’s fiery breath,
 The thorn in the flesh, oft press me near to death.

But the grace of God is sufficient, and evermore shall be,
 Till from my worst enemy, myself, I am for ever free.
 The wise and the prudent up the mount of error tiwne,
 Not in the sight of God, but in the sight of man to shine.

Let them keep their brazen confidence, let them keep their plate and
 Let me live as the righteous, and die in their true fold. [gold;
 O, sweet Jesus, in death’s hour again reveal that love,
 I’ll fly to thee, my glorious Ark, like the loving, trustful dove.

O the rich fruits of the Spirit! brought forth by the glorious Sun,
 Which causes heart, lip, and life, in sweet obedience to run;
 Not by man’s fallen will,—not by his fallen reason,—
 But when and where Christ pleaseth, fruits grow in their due season.

Not the untimely fruit, which one day must come down;
 Though it may tower to heaven, ’twill meet God’s dreadful frown;
 But the low tree that draws life from Christ the living Vine,
 Will stand for ever the stormy blast, and ever-green to shine.

Nestling beneath the shadow of Sharon’s glorious Rose,
 Till transplanted to its native soil where eternal summer glows;
 There in rich, full perfection, beneath his glorious face,
 Shall flourish in immortal beauty and ever-green of grace.

Though the messenger of Satan daily harasses my track,
 Yet, through Christ’s sufficiency, it cannot drive me back;
 For my nature stands in heaven,—in the Lamb without a spot,
 Where, received in Christ my Saviour, I shall stand in my lot.

And when these words from Jesus’ lips fall with life and power,
 I can then triumphant cry, “Where, Satan, is now thy power?”
 Thy hour of darkness past, the true light now is come,
 In manifestive glory, to light me to my home.

CAST DOWN, BUT NOT DESTROYED.

THE great aim of Christ in the world is to have a high place and esteem in the hearts of his people; to have there (as he hath in himself) the pre-eminence in all things; not to be jostled up and down among other things; to be all in all.—*Owen*.

REVIEWS.

Spiritualism and other Signs. By E. S. London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co.

MOVING in our own comparatively narrow circle, and separated as much by principle as by precept and practice from the seething mass which, like a troubled sea, boils all around us, how little do most of us know of that outer world of scheming policy and energetic action which is ever tossing its restless waves against the strong barriers of divine revelation. Dull sounds, feeble echoes, passing whispers, and stray rumours ever and anon reach our ears about Popery, Infidelity, Socialism, &c.; and the pulpit sometimes blows a faint alarm against the awful progress which these destructive agents of Satan are making in every direction; but how few of us possess any clear, distinct, or definite knowledge either of the nature or the advance of these deadly enemies of the truth of God. In some respects this ignorance of ours is a mercy; for, as with our maiden daughters, there are subjects on which ignorance is a blessing and knowledge a blot, and there is deep truth in the well-known lines,

"Where ignorance is bliss
'Tis folly to be wise."

If your situation in life, if your natural habits and circumstances, if your quiet seclusion and little retired cot admit it, or if your sensitive mind and tender conscience shrink from any knowledge of, any contact with, the outer world, happy in your ignorance, do not desire to lift the veil. It may be your safeguard from many sore exercises and grievous temptations which sadly assail those who are less happily circumstanced than you. Could, indeed, this happy ignorance be depended upon as a safeguard for all, as it is for you, the mercy couched in it would at once be doubled; but, unhappily, in this wretched world of ours, ignorance is no more a protection for those who have to battle with it than the simplicity of a country clown protects him in London streets from the devices of sharpers. Since the fall a knowledge of good and evil has been man's inheritance; and even in divine things, the matured Christian is he who has his senses exercised to discern both good and evil. (Heb. v. 14.) Whilst, then, we would sternly contend against the principle and practice of dabbling in evil to learn its nature, and would firmly abide by the precept, "Keep thyself pure," yet there is in many cases a disadvantage in being altogether ignorant of what is passing around us, and with which we may unexpectedly be brought into contact, or have to grapple with as if for life or death. In this world we cannot always live either with ourselves, or to and for ourselves, as if dear self were the sole object of our thought, care, and affection. We have wives or husbands, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, and perhaps servants and dependents; or if free from such ties, we are bound up in church fellowship, or the strong bonds of affection with the people of God. In all or some of these we may feel the deepest interest, and most earnestly and affectionately desire their present and eternal welfare. For their sake,

therefore, more than for our own, we cannot always preserve our happy ignorance. The most careful and watchful guardian of her daughters is not the mother who is ignorant of human nature and the snares laid for unsuspecting innocence, but she who has the keenest eye to discern the snake's nest in the grass, and crush each egg before it breaks out into a viper. We may have to guard and warn our children against a dangerous companion, or may see a subtle snare of Satan approaching, if not already entangling, a friend or fellow member, and may be enabled to speak a word which may be owned and blessed to his deliverance from the temptation. Satan is so wily; his agents from earth or hell so surround us; their designs are so masked, their language so plausible, their manners so insinuating and appearance often so imposing, their arguments so subtle, their activity so unwearied, their insight into character so keen, their enmity against Christ and his gospel so implacable; and their want of all principle and all honesty so thorough and complete, that the net may be drawing round us, or some one near and dear to us, before we have the slightest suspicion of these infernal plots being directed against our own homes. And as we, in our ignorant simplicity, are unaware of the nature, so are we as little acquainted with the amazing extent of the operations thus going on around us. You read or hear, for instance, good reader, sometimes about nuns and nunneries, and form to yourself, perhaps, some dreamy idea of what a sad thing it must be for a young female to be shut up for life in one of these gloomy abodes, hopelessly subject in body and soul to the will of the superior of the house, if not exposed to the worse dominion of priests and father confessors. But have you any idea of the number of these poor creatures thus immured? What do you think of 10,000 nuns at this present moment in our good old Protestant England? Yes; in that England whose very life blood is freedom from Popish thralldom, there are 10,000 English women tied hand and foot by vows, and under the irresponsible dominion, government, tyranny—call it what you will, of mother superiors, priests, and confessors. You have also heard, perhaps, of what is called, by an awful profanation of terms, "Spiritualism;" that is, the diabolical system of calling up, by some infernal jugglery, the spirits of the dead, and conversing with them. And how many figures do you think would represent the number of believers in this doctrine of devils? "Well," you answer, "perhaps, to take a large figure, one or two thousand." What do you think of five millions? Well, then, gentle reader, it seems that you and we have been living in a considerable, and, perhaps, comfortable, state of ignorance of what is going on with such activity all around us. You may be happily secure against such awful delusions by your knowledge and love of the truth, and may tartly say, "What is all this noise about? Why do you want to bother me with all this stuff and nonsense about runs and devil worshippers? I am not going to be caught in these traps of the devil." No; but that pleasing, amiable daughter of yours, whom you have this evening let go to a little

party of friends; what security have you that there may not be amongst those young people some one who has been initiated into the mysteries of table turning and spirit rapping, and lend her some little book about "mediums and spiritual agencies," which, after your long family prayers are over, she is devouring in her bedroom, with all the zest of a new sensational novel? And her younger sister, that dear little girl, so full of smiles and affection, whom you are so fond of, and as she goes tripping off to school so merrily and innocently, and looks back to give you a nod, your very heart cries, "Bless the little darling!" how do you know whether her governess, or some school teacher, or an elder pupil, who is drawing her by kindness to her bosom, is not tainted to the very core with Puseyistic or Popish views, and is secretly instilling them into her mind? Where do you think all these 10,000 nuns came from? Say that half were born Roman Catholics. Now there have been 5,000 entangled in such meshes as we have named, and perverted from their Protestant faith. And just consider the probable amount of misery which many if not most of these misguided girls caused to their own families before they took so decided and fatal a step as entering a nunnery. Think of a daughter of yours, perhaps the most dutiful and affectionate of them all, (for those are soonest entangled,) turned Papist, withdrawing herself from all your Lord's day and family worship, viewing you and her mother as heretics, half the day at her beads and devotions up stairs, and running off at every opportunity to confess her sins and all your family secrets and affairs to some young priest. Scores, if not hundreds, of families in this country are thus being racked and torn to pieces by wives or daughters entangled in the nets laid for them by Popery under its various guises. And it is spreading in all directions, entangling the poor as well as the rich, the young as well as the old. The high church party are now drawing off our little village and Sunday schools into some large central school, under a certificated teacher, tainted, perhaps, to the very core with views which are really Popish though nominally Protestant, and thus carrying off the rising generation. We cannot enlarge on this subject, but these hints may show that the danger may be nearer at hand, even to you, than you dream.

But assume that, through the Lord's goodness and mercy, neither you nor yours are exposed to such snares and dangers, and that his truth is not only your shield and buckler, but that his grace or providence is stretched over those near and dear to you by earthly ties. Still there may be many of our readers less favoured than yourself, to whom a word of instruction or warning may be seasonable. And even on the supposition that none of those under whose notice our words come need a warning sound, yet they may feel an interest in looking from their peaceful harbour on the storm-tossed sea, where many a ship is struggling and heaving amid the waves, and many a wreck may be seen through the white surf that is beating and curling over the rocks and shoals in the hazy distance.

There are three fearful shapes which Satan now seems to have

chiefly assumed to deceive the nations, and though they all unite in denial and disbelief of the truth; yet they each present their distinct aspects, and adapt themselves to the peculiar constitutions of men. These three desperate foes of God and man are Infidelity, Popery, and now this Spiritualism, or rather, Devilism. And just observe how they meet and adapt themselves to the various dispositions of the human heart. Some men naturally possess reasoning, arguing minds, which cannot be satisfied without penetrating into the causes of things, and revolt from everything supernatural, miraculous, and that does not lie quite level with the grasp of our mental faculties. Now these are the men who chiefly fall under the power of infidelity. They do not see what our deepest thinkers are now fully agree upon, that there are subjects which lie beyond the reach of pure mental reasoning, and which, therefore, can only be received, if received at all, by faith as distinct from logical argument. Rejecting therefore, everything which they cannot reconcile to their reasoning mind, they fall an easy prey to infidelity; and as this at once sweeps away all those moral restraints connected with a future state which hold others in check, they can, if sensually disposed, indulge in their passions and drink down sin like water. Hundreds, if not thousands of the working classes, and indeed of all classes, and none more so than some amongst the most educated and refined, are open or secret infidels.

But there is a peculiar class of mind which shrinks from infidelity as something horrible, as indeed it is, and repugnant to our natural conscience. If we may coin a word for the occasion, there is in some people a natural religiosity, that is, a disposition to be religious. If they had been born in Turkey, they would have been devout Mahometans; if in Italy, they would have become priests, monks, or nuns, and as ready to burn a heretic as their fathers; if born and bred in England, they would be devout churchmen, pious dissenters, sisters of mercy, &c., just as the various circumstances of birth and education, habits and associations, might dispose or determine. Now to these naturally religious minds, when fully ripened, and blended with a stern spirit of self-denial, which usually accompanies and grows up with it, no system so thoroughly adapts itself as that of Popery; for it just meets and gives full play to that habit of mind which yields, like clay, to every object of superstitious veneration. Memory recalls to us two striking instances of the two natural dispositions which we have mentioned. We once well knew two brothers. We hardly like to mention their names, though none are better known through the breadth and length of the land. They were both men of most powerful intellect, refined and cultivated to the highest point by the most indefatigable study, and were distinguished ornaments of the famous University to which they belonged. Where and what are they now? One, the elder brother, whom we knew less intimately, is the most distinguished pervert from the Church of England that Rome has received; the other, once an intimate friend, an eminent professor of classical learning, is now an avowed infidel. But whence came, humanly speaking, this

strange difference, this wide divergence between two brothers of almost, if not altogether, equal abilities and similar education, habits, and associations, so that after acute mental struggles of years the one should finally settle at one pole of the most grovelling superstition, believing in all the pretended miracles of the Romish saints, and the other at the opposite pole, denouncing Christianity itself as an imposture? May we not account for it from the constitutional difference of their minds—that the one is naturally credulous and superstitious, disposed to bow to authority, venerating names and ancient traditions, and the other is confident in its own reasoning powers, and determined to accept nothing but what can be logically proved?

But there is a third class of mind quite distinct from the two above-mentioned, though in many points allied to the first, which is naturally visionary, imaginative, ever living in a little world of its own, little disposed to bow to authority or venerate names or places, and still less unwilling and often unable to reason and argue, but very awake and alive to dreams, omens, supernatural appearances, and some breakings in of an unseen world as distinct from that hard, stern, common-place, every-day world where men toil and sweat for their bread all their lives, and then die and are thrust out of sight. What the soul is, what is a future state, what evidences there are, reliable and trustworthy, that there is one at all, what is become of departed friends, do they know anything about us, is their spirit ever near us?—many a mind that you little think of is exercised with these thoughts and inquiries. But you will say, "Why don't they believe the Bible? That would at once satisfy their minds, answer their inquiries, and clear up their anxieties." Yes, but that is the very thing they neither will nor can do. *You* can do it, because grace has touched your heart, and you have felt the power of the word in your soul. But we are not speaking here of the believing, but of the unbelieving, not of the favoured few who have received the love of the truth, but of the masses of society generally, the thousands who wander on without light or life, guide, guard, or God. Your talking about their reading and believing the Bible is almost like what the little daughter of Louis XVI. said to her governess, when she told her that the people in Paris were starving for want of bread: "Why don't they eat buns?" You have bread and buns too; and with your well-spread table, your dinner and dessert, your finest of the wheat, and wine on the lees well refined, you can hardly conceive the case of poor creatures starving for bread "who cut up mallows by the bushes, and juniper roots for their meat;" (Job xxx. 4;) who madly feed upon ashes, with a deceived heart, and a lie in their right hand. (Isa. xlv. 20.) It is of such we are speaking, for our present object is to show why it is that such damnable errors, as you justly see them to be, find so wide an acceptance, and number their converts and devotees by thousands and hundreds of thousands. We are endeavouring to explain how it is that Satan has such rule and dominion, and why some are held fast in the chains of Popery, others bound hand and foot in the prison of Infidelity, and others are bewildered and intoxicated with this

last gust of smoke from the bottomless pit, this commerce with spirits, or rather with demons and devils, awfully miscalled Spiritualism.

But it is high time to come to our Review of the work at the head of our present article. We may freely, then, say that we have read a good part of it with much interest; and we confess that we had no idea of the vast prevalence of this new delusion, "Spiritualism," until we found it stated in it on seemingly such undeniable authority. Though the title of the work is "Spiritualism," &c., yet the title hardly gives a fair representation of its contents, for by far the greater part of it is devoted to show the craft, subtlety, and abominations of Popery. This subject was, of course, not altogether a new one to us, as we have read many works on Romanism; and yet the authoress,—for the work is the production of a lady, has sketched it in striking colours; and if she has not brought forward anything very new, yet she has put together many striking facts, and confirmed her assertions by proofs and evidence drawn from the writings and speeches both of the friends and foes of the Papal system. As far as we can judge, she sincerely loves the great truths of the gospel, and sees clearly and feels deeply the nature and prevalence of those fearful delusions of Satan which she aims to expose, with the hope that she may be made an instrument either of rescuing some of their miserable victims, or of warning others, lest they fall into the same trap.

The chief value of the book, we think, consists in the copious extracts which she has given from various sources of the present practical working of Puseyism and Popery; for what is mainly wanted is not loud and sweeping declamation against this and that evil, but *facts*—solid, well substantiated facts, from which we can draw our own conclusions. Before we can form any right opinion, or come to a clear decision upon any case presented to our mind, we must have substantial evidence, plain facts, solid proofs, or our judgment is but a blind prejudice, a mere crediting reports and rumours, and adopting other people's views without knowing whether they are true or false. But when we get facts, proofs, undeniable evidence, then we move on solid ground, and our judgment has a firm basis to rest upon. These facts our authoress supplies; and thus enables us to see the very inside of some of those schemes of Satan whereby he is deceiving thousands to their perdition. We who live outside the circle have little idea of what is going on within it. We hear or read perhaps of this or that high churchman, and what is now doing in the very parish church in the town or village where we live; and some friend or neighbour, or the children may tell us of the late grand Christmas decorations, and the beautiful new altar-cloth, and the lighted candles, and the large flower vases, and the little chorister boys chanting and singing so prettily, and we may carelessly reply, "O poor creatures, with their dead forms!" But it were well if these ceremonies were but dead forms. Dead indeed they are, dead enough according to our view of spiritual life and death; but in another sense they are filled with a life of their own, most active and energetic, and absorbing the mind and feelings of their devotees to an extent you perhaps little

dream of. The old type of churchman has much passed away, and a new generation has sprung up which has almost ousted the quiet, regular orthodox rectors and vicars of our youth or of our fathers, who droned away to their scanty congregations half asleep under the shelter of the high-backed pews. A new spirit is abroad which is not only repairing and restoring churches, but by resuscitating dead forms, seeks to animate them with a life hostile to the truth of God, hostile to our reformed principles, and is in secret league with Rome against our most prized religious and civil liberties. A new life—not spiritual, for it is the very opposite; but a life of energy, zeal, and most bigoted, almost furious devotion to views and principles which are the very life blood of Popery, is now at work under these very forms and ceremonies which seem to you so dead and unmeaning. They are so, and that justly to you; but there are thousands to whom they are signs and symbols of a religion to which they cling with the most fervid enthusiasm. In this consist both their delusiveness to their adherents and their danger to us. Look at that poor Irish reaper going on a Sunday morning to mass at the Romish chapel. "O," you say, "what a poor foolish fellow he must be to worship a piece of bread." But under that blind devotion you do not see the smouldering flame which makes him hate you as a heretic with deadly hatred, and which, if urged on by a Fenian rebellion, would slake itself in your blood. So with these high-church forms, these raised altars, wax candles, intonings, and all the frippery and man-milinery of priestly vestments, which in the days of our fathers the whole parish would have hooted down as rank Popery. They appear at present to be only forms; but mark the spirit which breathes beneath them, as it sometimes breaks out in the pulpit, and see whether it be not the same as lighted up the Smithfield bonfires in the days of bloody Mary.

Here, then, is the chief value of a book like this. It enlightens our happy ignorance by bringing forward facts which cast a broad light on the doings and dealings of Satan and his agents. We shall now, therefore, having introduced our authoress, leave her with our best apologies for having kept her so long in the waiting room.

Let us hear first what she has to say about Spiritualism; and upon this point we think it best to confine her testimony to the number of its adherents, as the short extracts which we might give about its nature would probably only puzzle and perplex our readers, without benefiting them:

"There are now in the United States, Mr. Clarke tells us (in his "Plain Guide to Spiritualism,") 500 public mediums, who receive visitors; more than 50,000 more private ones; 500 books and pamphlets have been published on the subject, and many of them immensely circulated. There are 500 public speakers and lecturers on it, and more than 1,000 occasional ones. There are nearly 2,000 places for public circles, conferences, or lectures, and in many places flourishing Sunday-schools. The believers, the decisive believers, number about 2,000,000; while the nominal ones are nearly 5,000,000. In the eastern continent the number may be reckoned at 1,000,000. The whole number now on the globe supposed to recognize the fact of spiritual intercourse cannot fall short of 20,000,000."

A Mr. Barkas, in a lecture delivered at Newcastle, quite confirms this extraordinary statement:

“I need scarcely inform a Newcastle audience, who for years have had the subject of Spiritualism prominently brought before them, that the phenomena of modern Spiritualism had their origin in America, in 1846, in the neighbourhood of New York; that they spread with unexampled rapidity throughout the length and breadth of the American Union; that tens of thousands became mediums, and that about five millions became believers; that about thirty newspapers devoted to the question were published weekly or monthly; that upwards of one hundred works, some of them of a very extensive character, were issued from the press; that among the retinue of believers were judges, ministers, senators, doctors, and literary men, many of them the most learned men in America, that Abraham Lincoln was a Spiritualist, and consulted mediums; and that the philosophy—if philosophy it may be called—has penetrated into every nook and corner of American society.”

“The wave has rolled across the Atlantic, and believers in Spiritualism may be counted by hundreds of thousands in all the kingdoms of Europe. There are probably half-a-million of believers, to a greater or lesser extent, in England; there are fully that number in France and Spain; it has overrun Italy and Germany; works are published weekly and monthly, and many large volumes on Spiritualism have now an extensive circulation in all continental cities. Kardac, an enthusiastic hierophant of the new faith, is revolutionising France; the Emperor Napoleon himself is a consulter of familiar spirits.”

All we can say is, “Keep off yourselves, and keep all over whom you have any power or influence from approaching this devil’s own ground; and sternly forbid your children to have anything to do with mesmerism, table-turnings, &c., or even to associate with those who do, as the very atmosphere of such doings and dealings is full of infection and danger.”

But now we will give a few extracts from that part of her work where the authoress unfolds the workings of the Popish system as now developing itself in our midst, whether under the disguise of what are called High Church principles, or the more open form of Romanism. Our first two extracts will show the number of Romish priests, chapels, monasteries, and nunneries in this land:

“It is hardly necessary to remind the reader that in the year 1829 there were in Great Britain 477 Popish priests, 449 Popish chapels, and scarcely a monastery or nunnery. In the present year of 1864 there are 1,445 Popish priests, 1,098 Popish chapels, 56 monasteries, and 186 nunneries.”

In the following extract the convents are stated at 200, which takes in 14 in Scotland, besides the 186 just mentioned:

“In a recent lecture, given by Dr. Cumming, he observed, referring to convents, that “they were held sacred by the Pope, to be maintained by the state, and the magistrates were to have the power of punishing those who escaped from these institutions. Now in England there were about 200 convents, where 10,000 ladies were shut up. Was it not reasonable to assume that many of these would gladly escape? Entered perhaps at the early age of sixteen or seventeen, after serving a brief apprenticeship at a tractarian place of worship, which were merely training schools for the future inmates of convents. It was not to be denied that some entered after mature reflection, though no doubt many who entered young would, after serving four or five years, be glad to be free. But while the Queen’s representatives had charge of minors, and could inspect at pleasure lunatic asylums or hospitals, these convents defied the inspectors’ powers. Was it desirable there should be such secluded spots in this country? What were their principles? From the highest Romish authority nuns were taught to despise the

married state. They were told to obey their confessor, for so doing they obeyed God. Their property might be taken by the superior; they must submit to be beaten, though not in the presence of a layman, and to murmur was a great sin." After reading various rules by which nuns were governed, the lecturer asked "if it was wonderful that the Pope protested against the inspection of such institutions, or was it surprising that the priests in this country should cry out against any attempt to pass a law for the inspection of convents? Nor was it, seeing such places existed in this land, surprising to hear Protestants were petitioning that these sacred abodes, which held these 10,000 ladies, should be thrown open to the inspector's gaze."

The following extracts will show how gradually what are called High Church principles are preparing the public mind for Popery. For what is the mode of operation, and how do these things work? Thus: They gradually prepare the eyes of a congregation to witness a more exciting and gorgeous ceremonial than the usual one offered in the parish churches, and accustom the ear to listen to doctrines which are really Popish, but just at present veiled under a thin cover of what they term Church views. All this acts on the mind of the people, and by degrees paves the way for a fuller development both of ceremonial and doctrine, till whole congregations become imbued with the principles and practices of Popery, almost before they are aware of their nature and tendency. We thus see that should anything favour the re-introduction of Popery as a State measure, there would be scores, if not hundreds, of ministers and congregations already prepared to embrace it. This is the most alarming feature of the High Church movement. Ridiculous in themselves, they only pave the way for what is really formidable, and would be destructive to our most prized liberties, civil and religious:

"There is a penitentiary in Holywell Street, Oxford, of which the Bishop of Oxford is patron. A Christian lady became a visitor there, believing, as the institution bore the name 'Protestant,' the teaching and treatment of the inmates would necessarily be conducted on Protestant principles. The lady was not long in seeing that everything so resembled what she had seen in such places in a Roman Catholic country, that she commenced an inquiry, and found that the confessional was regularly organized and steadily carried on by a young clergyman from one of the colleges, who attended periodically for the purpose. In a room upstairs he and one young woman after another, alone, knelt together before a large cross (previous to which he put on his surplice). The lady visitor can testify that the character of this confession partook exactly of the ordinary confession of the Church of Rome! Small blame to the lady for informing herself fully, and then writing to the patron! She did so, and gave him a true and complete report of facts. The bishop did not reply to it himself, but sent the letter to the 'Lady Superior' of the institution, and in *her* reply to the bishop (which he forwarded to the lady) she writes:

"My dear Lord,—I have read Mrs. —'s letter, which you enclose. The Sister Superior made her the true and direct answer. We in no way go beyond the line laid down in the Prayer Book, and which leaves those who are burdened with sin free to open their griefs, and receive the benefit of counsel and absolution. We are very careful that none are admitted to confession but those who really do feel the burden of sin: and who dare deny to sin-laden souls, such as we seek to save, the comfort and help which the Church of England provides for them? &c., &c.

"June 13, 1862."

"Christ Church, Clapham.

"Lady-day was observed at this church with great solemnity. The violet hangings of the sanctuary were undisturbed, but in front of them were ranged

hundreds of candles, and on the super-altar stood six enamelled brazen vases filled with the choicest camellias, the two next the cross being all white flowers. Tall lilies and azaleas were placed on the floor right and left of the altar, which was vested in the very beautiful white silk frontal. Even-song commenced on the eve at 8 o'clock, when the procession entered, singing a joyous hymn. The cross was borne on high, and before the priests came two acolytes in scarlet cassocks, with lawn collars, one swinging a silver censer, the other bearing the incense boat. The altar was first incensed, and even-song proceeded. Before and after the 'Magnificat,' the proper antiphon was sung by the full choir, and as the jubilant strain arose the candles were lighted, the effect being indescribably magnificent. While the choir chanted the song of Our Lady, the altar was incensed, and the choir and people by an attending acolyte. At the close of even-song, the Rev. C. Soames preached an excellent sermon on the Incarnation; and the altar having been again incensed, and the benediction given by the Rev. B. Abbot, the choir re-formed the procession, going round the church to the vestry, singing,

'Praise the Lord, ye heavens adore him.'

At the early celebration on Lady-day, the Rev. B. Abbot was celebrant; and at the high celebration, which took place after 11 o'clock matins, the Rev. C. Soames officiated, wearing the splendid silk chasuble; the Rev. B. Abbot, as deacon, being vested in the white dalmatic. The altar being incensed, the divine office proceeded chorally to the Gospel, when, as well as at the offertory and the canon, incense was again offered. There was no sermon, and a goodly number communicated, many candles being lighted at and before the celebration. Even-song was plain, as it was considered that the eve of the Sunday in Lent superseded the second vespers of the festival, which nowhere was observed in a more Catholic manner than in this now flourishing little church."

The Defence, delivered on Lord's-day Morning, November 12, 1865.

By Mr. James Wells, at the New Surrey Tabernacle, Wansey Street, Walworth Road. Stevenson, 54, Paternoster Row.

WE have felt, and still feel, a difficulty in dealing any further with the now celebrated Rahab controversy. Whatever motives be imputed to us, one thing was clear, that we were called upon by our position to take some notice of a subject which has caused so much excitement in the churches, and to express our opinion of views so destructive of even moral truth. Having thus far discharged our duty and our conscience, we wished to let the matter rest. But Mr. Wells has preached and published his Defence, in which he has explained some of his expressions and partly retracted others; though he still adheres to his former views, that Rahab was fully justified in deceiving the king's messengers, and that her lies were not, properly speaking, falsehoods, but "lawful evasions." Whether he has much mended the matter by this last explanation we must leave to the discernment of spiritual minds, which may not see much real difference between a lie and an evasion. But our difficulty is this: Wholly to pass by his defence would seem to be unfair, as the commonest principles of law and justice demand that every person accused of an offence should be allowed to defend himself from what may be a false charge. But on the other hand, for us to go through a long sermon, point by point, as we should have to do were we to take the subject fully up, would not only occupy more room than we could give, and necessarily keep out much more profitable matter, but would be a wearisome, and, what is worse, a useless task.

both for our readers and ourselves. We shall, therefore, make this compromise. We shall do Mr. Wells the simple act of justice of allowing him to give his explanation, by furnishing an extract from the sermon, and, after making a few remarks upon it, shall close the controversy:

“Well now, in the first place, before I enter upon these parts I may just observe that my opponents seem to hold this idea; and the Lord is witness I will not if I know it misrepresent one; I am independent; I stand upon the Lord's mercy to me, I have no other standing, justice at their hands I do not expect, only there may be some exceptions among them; mercy I do not need; my conscience I will not give up for any man. And I am sure you, as Englishmen and as Christians, deem your liberty of conscience one of the sweetest privileges of your existence. Why, bind the conscience! you bind the soul, you bind the man, and the man ceases to be a man as soon as ever he lays his conscience at the feet of any man or class of men. They charge me with representing God as suspending his holiness, and his justice, and his moral perfections; why, I must be an idiot, a madman, and a fool, all combined in one, to suppose the great God could suspend his holiness, or his justice, or his integrity, or any of his moral perfections. He is immutable, unchangeable, unalterable. I never dreamt of such a foolish notion as that. My opponents have looked pretty sharply after me, and they have found out six faults in my sermon, and I have found out one more—that's seven—so that you see how kind I have been to them; they strangely overlooked one, which I saw. I will now name the faults, and give my answer to them.

“First, that I hold that a good lie is better than a bad truth. Now I did not explain in that sermon what I meant; I meant that under certain circumstances, lawful evasions—for that is the term I shall apply this morning;—I will observe that there are evasions which may be lawfully used; and that I would rather use lawful evasions to save a friend, than I would ignorantly, like the fool, utter all my mind and betray my friend. But unhappily I put this, my meaning, into unguarded language. I there said, that telling a truth that would injure the people of God, would be worse than telling a lie that would not injure them. If I had said what I should have said—and I suppose you will allow me to repent, you will allow me the privilege of repenting—I repent that I used the unguarded language. I did not know we should be so looked after; I did not know that I was of so much importance; I did not know that half-a-dozen sentences from an unpretending individual like myself would open the mouth of a volcano, whose elements had been for some time restlessly seeking an outlet. I did not know that a few sparks from my tongue, would set so many *hypers* on fire; I was not aware they were such dry trees as to be so easily set on fire; some of them are dry enough in all conscience, but they now turn out to be more dry than I thought they were; and therefore, in future, I will be careful how I play with fire, lest I set them on fire again, and burn them to death. Now it was held a maxim in the heathen world that ‘a good lie is better than a bad truth;’ but I do in the sight of the great God this morning declare to you that I stand infinitely removed from any such sentiment. I do not believe in a good lie. A lie means that which is a wicked contrivance, something that hath in it all the elements of wickedness, that makes it criminal; and therefore a good lie, a sinless lie, is an utter impossibility in the very nature of it. So then I do not hold that a good lie is better than a bad truth; God forbid I should; that is, not in the sense that many impute it to me; and in future I shall not use that language to express that part of my meaning. Let this suffice then.

“Second, if I were placed in analogous circumstances to Rahab, and had the same divine authority, I would tell ten thousand such falsehoods as she told. Mind, I at the same time maintain that those falsehoods were literally untrue, but morally true. But I will use another word. My object this morning is for you to get at my meaning. Now put it in this form. Well now, some of you that do not see with me, put yourselves into my place just for a minute. I believe that Rahab's words were lawful evasions. Now mind that,

keep that in view, that is what I meant then. I regret I did not express it more clearly that her words were lawful evasions, that God sanctioned those evasions, and I shall presently give you my reasons for believing that he inspired those evasions. With that impression, mind, with that impression, that those evasions were right, that those evasions were sinless, that those evasions had divine sanction—mind that, with that impression—I said that if I were placed in analogous circumstances, and had the same divine authority, I would use, for the sake of saving the lives of the spies, (and I shall presently show what good she did to the king's messengers by those evasions, as well as the spies that were placed in that position), I would, rather than betray my trust use ten thousand such evasions. Now that is my meaning.*

We cannot say that we much like the spirit manifested in the above extract. If a public man advance sentiments which shock even our moral feelings, he should not attribute the opposition shown to them to such unworthy motives as jealousy. Mr. Wells is evidently deeply stung by the fact that many of his own party have denounced his views of the lies told by Rahab. But why should he claim to himself so strongly the right of private judgment, and deny it to them? It makes the whole matter a mere question of party, not of truth, if a minister may advance any opinions that he pleases, and if they are opposed then to call out that there is no better ground of opposition to his views than paltry jealousy. Such language resolves all dispute and discussion into this: "Who is on my side, right or wrong? If any oppose my views, it is because they are jealous of my gifts, or of my popularity, or of my influence." But surely a man may oppose Mr. Wells's views without being jealous of Mr. Wells's position. As long as controversy is carried on in a spirit of fairness, and without wrath and bitterness, it is often absolutely necessary to the defence of truth and to the exposing of error; and it is unworthy of a man who has a cause to maintain, be it good or bad, to impute base motives to those who conscientiously differ from him, and can give their reasons for doing so.

But now a few words upon the point to which Mr. Wells has reduced the whole controversy. It is this, that Rahab's lies were not lies in the ordinary sense of the word, that is positive criminal falsehoods, but "lawful evasions inspired of God, and having his sanction and authority."

Now we have always understood, both on moral and religious grounds, that an evasion, if not an actual downright lie, so partakes of the nature of one that none but a Jesuit or a father confessor can distinguish between them. Of this there cannot be a better proof than the testimony of one's own conscience. Most of us probably have been guilty, some time or other, of an evasion, or of something very like one. Now, did not conscience give us a sharp twinge for this, and inwardly testify that we had been guilty of some deception, of something which, if not a lie, was so like it that no excuse that we might try to make could justify it even to

* The printer of the "Gospel Standard" begs to say he is not responsible for either the grammar or punctuation of the above extract, his compositor having "followed the printed copy" of the sermon literally.

ourselves? For what is an evasion? It is not merely, as the word literally means, an escaping or a slipping out of a difficulty, but doing so by a positive act of deception—making the person to whom the evasive answer is given believe what we know is not the truth. But if we examine Rahab's answers to the king's messengers, we shall find that they were not evasions, that is, evasive answers to their inquiries, but plain, positive, direct falsehoods. Her words to the messengers were: "There came men unto me, but I wist not (that is, I knew not) whence they were." Now she knew perfectly well whence the men were, and that they had just come from the camp of Israel. But this was not the only lie that she told: "And it came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out. Whither the men went I wot (or knew) not. Pursue after them quickly, for ye shall overtake them." There was no evasion here; but a positive direct lie, and to make it appear more true, she mentioned circumstances, such as the time of their departure, and urged the messengers to pursue them quickly. Now, how can these positive lies be called "evasions," that is, in the sense of evasive answers? Let us not juggle with words. An evasion is an indirect answer, a shifting of the ground, a dash of truth with a large amount of falsehood, so as to give the whole matter a false colouring, and thus deceive the inquiring party. Johnson, therefore, defines it: "Excuse subterfuge; sophistry; artifice;" and Webster adds, "Equivocation; artifice to elude; shift." But Rahab did not give evasive answers. She told positive lies. How much better, then, and simpler it would be to admit at once that they were lies, but that God mercifully pardoned them, and overruled them for good. Whatever we do, let us not tamper with so sacred a thing as truth; and rather acknowledge that we are wrong a thousand times over, knowing how the wisest of men may err, than involve the holiness of God.

We speak thus because we feel constrained to add that, in our judgment, Mr. Wells has used some very reprehensible language in saying that God *inspired* them—that they had not only his sanction and authority, but his positive inspiration. Now this seems to us really worse than the first error. To ascribe to God so pure, so holy, the inspiration of a lie, in other words, that he breathed a lie into Rahab's soul, and by his Holy Spirit suggested to her direct and positive falsehood, is to our mind something very shocking. Take Mr. Wells even on his own ground. He surely will not deny that an evasion, if not a lie, must partake of the nature of one—that it is more or less a deviation from strict truth. Now, that God should inspire into a man's soul the least deviation from truth is, to say the least, a most dangerous position, and without the shadow of authority from the Scriptures. If he had said that God permitted Rahab to deceive the messengers, brought good out of it, and mercifully forgave it, it would have satisfied all the exigencies of the case. None doubt Rahab's salvation; none doubt that her receiving the spies and sending them away were acts of faith. Why, then, attempt to justify her where she was wrong, especially on

such dangerous grounds as to ascribe her sin to the express inspiration of God?

Mr. Wells, then, need not be surprised if his defence should not allay the waters of strife. He had a fair opportunity to recall views against which there was such a general outcry; for he should have seen that the concurrence of so many voices was not a conspiracy against his popularity, but the result of Christian feeling in a number of persons who, however they may differ in other points, feel warmly where moral or spiritual truth is at stake. He has, however, taken a firm stand, and in a sermon preached Nov. 5th, proclaimed "war to the knife,"*—they are his own words, and fearful words they are for a gospel minister to use, against all opponents. We should truly rejoice to see him throw away both his errors and his knife, for neither of them will prosper in his hand; and we sincerely hope he may repent with godly sorrow that ever the warmth of his mind should have led him to use such language as that with which we close our present article. But he may live to prove, and may it be in mercy, not in judgment, which is stronger, James Wells and the knife, or the word of God and the sword of truth.

"Now if I am spared till next Sunday-morning I have to give what I think I may call my defence, but it will not be such a one as some of you might think. I have been in a conciliatory mood, desiring so to explain things as to conciliate my opponents, and bring matters to a peaceful issue. But that day is gone, sir; these last twenty-four hours have brought about an irreversible revolution in my mind. I will hear no terms of peace; I will accede to nothing that shall in any way bring my conscience into bondage. I am got beyond all remonstrance, all reasoning. Much as I love our deacons, and happy as I am with them, not a soul shall I listen to contrary to the position I have taken to defend myself sternly and decisively against my opponents upon the faith of Rahab. Much as I love you, the members of the church, and care for you, yet not a sentence shall move me; much as I love the congregation at large, and friends about the country, yet I have passed the Rubicon, the matter is done, my sword is drawn, my shield is anointed, my credentials clear, my watchword given, 'Conquer or die.' 'War to the knife,' sir, shall be my motto now as long as I breathe. I will be tyrannized over by none."

CHRIST is the food of his people. They feed on him, the bread of life, which came down from heaven to them, they believing on him that he gave himself for them. His flesh is meat indeed, and their conscience being purged thereby from the guilt and filth of sin, his blood is drink indeed. None can truly delight themselves in God but such as believe in him as their God and Father in Christ Jesus; and if we are enabled to lift up our face without spot to God, it must be through that blood that cleanseth from all sin having been applied to our consciences.—*Chamberlain.*

* This expression requires, perhaps, a little explanation. At the siege of Saragossa, in Spain, in 1808, the French had forced their way into the town by the gate of Santa Engracia, and were thus masters of nearly half of Saragossa. The French general summoned Palafox, the Spanish commander, to surrender in the following laconic sentence: "Head-quarters, Santa Engracia. Capitulation." Palafox's answer was equally laconic: "Head-quarters, Saragossa. War to the knife;" meaning thereby that if the worst came to the worst, each surviving Spaniard had a knife to plunge into a Frenchman's bosom.

INQUIRY.

Sir,—Will you give your opinion on the meaning of the apostle, 1 Tim. v. 8? A CONSTANT READER.

ANSWER.

In the apostolic churches provision was made for the poor widows and other needy members out of a fund raised by voluntary gifts and weekly contributions, and distributed by the deacons. (Acts iv. 34, 35; vi. 1; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.) Now, sometimes this kindness of the church to its poor members was abused. Instead of providing for the wants of their widowed mothers or grandmothers, (for the word rendered "nephews" means rather "grandsons," or lineal descendants,) sons and grandsons, sometimes, who could well afford to keep them out of their own income, threw them upon the funds of the church, to save their own pockets. This conduct the apostle reprehends. "Honour widows that are widows indeed." (1 Tim. v. 3.) By "widows indeed," he means those who, in losing their husbands, have lost all their subsistence, and who are to be honoured not only by paying them all the respect due to their condition, but by giving them the needed relief out of the church fund. He then takes up the case to which we have alluded: "But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents; for that is good and acceptable before God." (1 Tim. v. 4.) There were cases, then, in which the widows in the church had believing children or grandchildren who could maintain them, without throwing that burden on the church; and therefore he says, "Let these professing sons or grandsons learn, as one of their first lessons of Christian conduct, to show piety, or 'kindness' (*margin*) at home, and requite their parents for taking care of them in their infancy, by providing for them in their old age." Having then described the true widow (verse 5) and the sham one, (verse 6,) and given a solemn warning that these instructions should be attended to, he adds the words which form the subject of the inquiry: "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." (1 Tim. v. 8.) If, then, we simply read them by the light of the context, which we have given above, the meaning of the words seems plain enough. It is a declaration of the mind of God against every professing man who, from laziness, covetousness, or self-indulgence, will not provide for his own relations; and especially if, besides the ties of nature, they are united in the bonds of grace; for that is the meaning of the expression, "Those of his own house." It does not mean his family literally, for that is expressed by the words "his own," but the members of his own church, which is his house, as the house of God. (Heb. iii. 6.) The word "his own house" is just the same in the original as is translated "the household"—"the household of faith;" (Gal. vi. 10;) and the word "specially" is used in both instances to show the peculiarly binding claims of the church on its members, and of grace on its possessors and professors. The neglect of such a double claim draws down

his sternest denunciation. "A man," he says, "who is so dead to all natural feeling as not to provide for his own relatives, whether children or widowed parents, and so dead to all spiritual feeling as not to be moved towards them as members of the same church or of the mystical body of Christ, has denied the faith by such covetous, selfish, inconsistent conduct, and is really worse than an infidel, that is, an unbelieving Gentile, who will often take care of his poor widowed mother, and not throw her heartlessly on the compassion of strangers. But you," he says, "a professing man, who can provide for your widowed mother, or poor old grandmother, and will not, but will throw her on the church to maintain; and thus rob the church funds and diminish the aid to be given to the poor widows who have no sons or grandsons to keep them; why, such conduct shows that you have no faith in God as a God of providence or grace, and that you are, with all your profession, worse than many an unbelieving Gentile."

This is the meaning of the apostle; but, of course, like other precepts of the New Testament, it has a wide application, and will take in the numerous cases where lazy professors would sooner mump a living than work for it, and throw upon others the burden which they should willingly take on themselves.

Obituary.

JAMES ALLARD, OF HORSEMONDEN.

AT Horsemonden, Kent, JAMES ALLARD, aged 69 years.

I have heard him speak of being convinced of his sins about the age of 21; and though he was naturally of a cheerful turn of mind, and tried hard to enjoy the pleasures and amusements of the world, yet the Lord was pleased to embitter them to him; for these words followed him: "'Ye must be born again;' and though you follow hard after your lovers, you shall not overtake them;" so that he was obliged to leave them. His distress of mind still increased on account of his sins, for he was brought to feel that not only was he a sinner by practical sins, but there was his original sin likewise; and these words were fastened upon him: "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses as filthy rags;" and, "How can a clean thing come out of an unclean?"

One evening he went up stairs to his bedroom in great distress of soul, feeling the sentence of death pass upon him that he must be damned, when these words came to him: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden;" and a cry went out of his soul, "Lord, save, or I perish;" when the Lord was pleased to put forth his power and bring him up from the depths of soul-trouble by removing all his sins, and shedding abroad his love in his heart, so that he wanted the dear Lord to take him to himself, that he might never sin against him any more.

It was his continual cry to the Almighty to keep his fear alive in his heart, that he might never bring a disgrace on the cause of

Christ; and the Lord was pleased to grant him his desire, as many friends can witness how conscientious he was in all his ways; for though he had many heart backslidings, yet I have often heard him say how thankful he was the Lord did not leave him without chastening him, and bringing him back again with weeping and supplication.

It was on the 3rd of April, 1865, that he was seized with the complaint which terminated in his death. It began with a severe pain in his right foot, which continued night and day. No doctor's medicine or any outward application could give him ease for any time. Sometimes he felt dark in his mind, and very much cast down in his soul's feeling, the enemy being permitted to harass his poor soul; but the Lord was pleased to appear for him again and again, and to endear himself to him; so much so that he begged the dear Lord to take him, and he used to tell the doctor he wanted to go home; he had no wish to get better. Many friends who visited him in his illness remarked what a blessed affliction it was; through the Lord's kind manifestations to him, he was so sensible, quiet, and peaceful. I will mention one memorable day. He said, "This 7th of June is a memorable day to me, James Allard. When sitting on my bed of affliction, on which I had been lying nine weeks, and looking at my foot, which was very painful, my mind was brought to the mind and will of the Almighty, and I was enabled to leave it with the dear Lord whether to restore it or not. I felt submission to his will either way; when the dear Lord was pleased to reveal himself to me in his sufferings for my sins. As it is written: 'They shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn;' and truly I may say it was as much as I could bear up under. At the same time a female friend, a child of God I believe, whom I had thought I had offended, came in unexpectedly, and we united together in one spirit to bless and praise the dear Lord for his great mercy to such vile sinners as we were."

He had many very blessed visits from the Lord in times of extremity; so that he begged of the Lord to take him home, or grant him patience to wait his time.

About a fortnight before his decease, the complaint seemed to be leaving the foot a little; but it appears it was secretly working upon the whole system, for he was seized with a violent pain in his right side, which hurt his breathing very much, and hurt him to talk, and we were troubled to understand what he said. I was, therefore, loth to say much to him to cause him pain; but as I thought he was drawing near his end, I asked him how his mind was, and he said, "Dark!" but, he said, "It is all right!"

I believe his end was peace. "The memory of the just is blessed."
 Horsemonden, Jan. 1, 1866. M. A. ALLARD.

THE constitution of grace is somewhat as the constitution of nature. It feeds upon variety, but variety of God; God in riches, God in honours, God in everything. If God be missing in any person, in any dish at the table, it stinks.—*From an Old Author.*

MARCH 1, 1866.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

MARCH, 1866.

MATT. V. 6; 2 TIM. I. 9; ROM. XI. 7; ACTS VIII. 37, 38; MATT. XXVIII. 19.

I WILL SING OF MERCY AND JUDGMENT.

(Concluded from page 42.)

As I stood in the garden, in the middle of the night, what a revelation I had to my soul of the unspeakable dreadfulness of being lost. I saw it was to lie for ever beneath the never-appeased wrath of an avenging God, that his wrath would be poured out with no diminution for ever and ever. "Waters of a full cup are wrung out to them," ever flowing, yet never full; and these thoughts so overwhelmed every other consideration with me that I said, "What is this body? I could destroy it in a moment. The pain that it would inflict would be as nothing to the anguish that fills my soul with fears of such a fate;" and as I looked at the ground, I felt, "What would it advantage me to get into the grave? for his wrath would pursue me there;" and I said to my dear father, now in glory, "Father, I can never attend to business any more. I have done with this world, unless the Lord appears for my soul." And with this I left them, (my parents,) who fain would have comforted me; but I was beyond the reach of all but the great Physician himself.

Now in truth, while in this state, I never beheld the church of God safer in all my life. I seemed to view them as within a circle, or ring, Jesus standing in the midst, saving all within that circle, and myself standing without. How well I understood Mr. Smart in his sermon, when he said, "Did you ever feel as if Jesus must give an extra stretch of his arm to bring you in?" I could answer, "Yes."

But to return. I went to my bed, but did not undress myself nor put out my candle. I felt that to be in the dark would give the terrifying enemy of my soul an advantage; and as I lay, pondering on my woful condition of ending in black despair, a few words fell upon my heart, "Who can tell?" I seemed to answer, "Who can tell?" I said, "If I am alive at this time to-morrow, and out of hell, hope might come;" for I felt solemnly that unless some mercy was shown to me, some relief brought, I should sink, body and soul, beneath the load of distress that I was then under. I felt as if I could never even eat human food again unless the Lord had mercy on my soul. It was indeed with me, "ready to perish;" and at

this time, next to the loss of my own soul, the thought how my wretched end would bring reproach on the cause of God cut me to the heart indeed. I felt that the enemies of the truth would say, "Ah! He left the Church of England and died in black despair, as the judgment of God;" when I knew it was not for that, but for my sins. What bitter grief my soul was filled with, at the thought of the injury done to the children of God. I believe the first herald in my soul of approaching mercy was a feeling given to me that the Lord *pitied* me in my distress; and I thought that had I not got *beyond* salvation, he would have saved me; but now he could only look on me to *pity* me as one out of his reach to save. I have often thought if I saw a poor soul in such a case as mine, who could say they felt the pity of the Lord, I could say to them, "Thy redemption draweth nigh;" but I did not know that then. With this came the thought: "Shall I once more try prayer?" as during this night's conflict I had not dared to pray, knowing "the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord." I felt it would increase my condemnation. Then I felt, "If so, I can but perish;" so I resolved to put up my last prayer,—a cry for mercy! Before doing so, I felt I should like to address all my cry to the Lord Jesus Christ; for I felt it was against him in an especial manner, as a Person in the glorious Trinity, that I had offended; but lest I should slight God the Father, or the Holy Ghost, I would pray to each and all; so I looked up, and as if I summoned every nerve of body and soul for this my last hope, I cried, "God the Father! God the Son! God the Holy Ghost! save my poor soul from sinking down this night into hell!"

I said no more; but looked and looked for the answer. It came not. Black despair, like a cloud, seemed to be closing in upon me, to end the scene; and in an agony of despair, I jumped off the bed, shut my eyes, as if I dared not look upon my fate, and cried within myself, "It is all over!" I felt as if I was lost for ever! When lo! as if Jesus spake to me from heaven, these words were sent with saving power to my soul: "I will not leave you comfortless." Blessed change indeed! I said, "I've hope! I've hope! I've hope!" I would not take a million pounds a piece for these six words. Though not fully delivered, I never sank so low again; but Satan was not willing to give up his prey. It was now set before me that the promise had nothing to do with me; it was for the apostles only before the Lord's ascension. I felt the rage of hell still pursue me to wrest the promise from my soul. As some one has said, "Satan pulled, and I pulled;" and although great fear yet possessed me, mercy of mercies! I had a promise to plead and the weapon of prayer restored to me. I kept crying, "O Lord, thou saidst thou wouldst not leave me comfortless. I beseech thee deliver my soul." Thus I prayed, over and over again.

As I had been in such a state all night, my mouth was dried up as if I had a burning fever. How I longed for a glass of water! But such was my tender fear about doing anything wrong that I dared not drink it, lest I should be using a carnal means for my

comfort in any way; and, as before said, I kept pleading the promise and crying for mercy with every breath I drew. I understood Bunyan about the place called "All-prayer." I was even now tempted to drown my trouble with drinking brandy, or to stupefy myself with smoking. These words came with power: "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation;" and I was enabled to be obedient to the divine command.

About 3 o'clock in the morning, as I was so crying for deliverance, I felt all at once a subsiding of the power of the dreadful foe; and the storm became a calm. How these words describe my experience at this time: "They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still." The time of blessing and praising was not fully come; but I enjoyed a sweet, calm peace and trust in God, that he would fully deliver me; and I would here state that this taste of the water of life slaked my natural thirst, and set free my parched mouth; but I felt great bodily weakness, as I had been in this state about two days and nights, with very little rest or food. Indeed, my body had shrunk as if I had had a pining sickness, in this short time; so with sweet child-like faith I knelt down, and, after thanking my merciful God for thus far helping me, I asked him for a little sleep of nature, that my body might be able to bear up under the things I was passing through; and he granted my request. I had the sweet experience of David: "I cried unto the Lord, and he heard me out of his holy hill. I laid me down and slept. I awaked, for the Lord sustained me."

Before falling asleep, I was favoured with a revelation to my soul of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. I seemed to behold, not with any vision but with the eye of faith, the throne of God, and God sitting thereon; and before it stood the Lord Jesus Christ, as if his righteousness was to be judged or looked at; and it was spotless; no fault could be found. The Lord upon the throne was quite satisfied. With this I said, "O my blind eyes, that I never saw this before! How could I be so blind as to think I could work out any righteousness that would do to bring before this throne, to be judged or looked upon?" I now saw it was Jesus Christ that did every thing right to please God the Father, which I had tried in vain to do, and I must stand behind him, and plead his righteousness, that I might be saved in it, and by it, and for it. I afterwards found my experience expressed in this verse: "I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only."

I slept as calmly as if a trouble had never crossed my mind; but when I awoke, my implacable foe was there to harass and distress me. I hastened to my father's house. My parents rejoiced over me that I had hope. Shortly afterwards these words were sent with healing power and sweetness into my troubled heart: "When thou passest through the waters, they shall not overflow thee." My happy soul was filled to the brim with peace and joy in believing.

I felt as sure of my safety in Christ as if all these waters of temptation and affliction were already passed through; and as if to confirm it as from the Lord, scripture poured into my mind from various parts of the word, descriptive of the conflict I had been passing through. Verses I could make nothing of before were now made plain to my soul: "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." Also: "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and against spiritual wickedness in high places." Also: "Shall the prey be taken from the mighty or the lawful captive delivered?" and others. Memorable day for my soul!

I will speak of what passed in the night following this day. I awoke. My first thought was, "Is the enemy at hand?" No; this time it was the Friend. These words dropped with melting love upon my heart, "He carries the lambs in his bosom." In a moment my soul was full of blissful love. I was in his bosom now! O the soul-rapturing love that filled my heart! His bowels melted over me with love. It was neither like praise nor prayer. I talked to my heavenly Friend, as when Joseph made himself known to his brethren. "His brethren talked with him." In the sweet language of holy faith and love, I called him my dear and crucified Lord; and I said, "Why me? Why me? O thou suffering Lamb, thou mightest have spared thyself the sufferings due to my sins; for of all that thou wouldst have been holy and just in leaving to perish, it was I." O the view I had in this hour of the sufferings of the dear Redeemer in the garden of Gethsemane. It was as if my taste of the cup, as Hart says, was as it were the clay and spittle that anointed my eyes, to view this wonder of wonders, "Jesus, stricken, smitten, afflicted;" all the penal wrath due to Zion poured out to the uttermost upon his holy soul. I had such a view of it that I thought, "Well might even the incarnate God cry out, 'If it be possible, let this cup pass from me.'" O mercy of mercies! It was not possible. The scriptures must be fulfilled. Here I learnt this scripture: "By his stripes we are healed;" and I felt and saw what Hart has so well expressed:

"Our Captain stood the fiery test,
And we shall stand through him."

I wept in love and pity over him in a way I cannot express. Being a child, I spake as a child. I said, "Lord, do let me be a suffering witness for thee upon the face of the earth; for I am willing." I knew not what I meant, but I felt willing to bear anything if so be I could glorify his name who had freely suffered so for me, in spite of all I had done to provoke him to leave me to perish as I deserved. "What shall I render unto thee for all thy benefits?" was the language of my soul. I seemed to have but one trouble, and that was that I could not praise him according to his deserts. I kept saying, "Help me to praise thee! Help me to praise thee!" I understood David, where he calls upon mountains and hills and

beasts of the field and everything that hath breath to praise the Lord.

I was in this sweet and blessed frame and employment about two hours, and then fell asleep. When I awoke, he was gone. Like the spouse in Solomon's Song, "I opened to my Beloved; but he was gone. I sought him, but I could not find him. I called, but he made no answer." How I chided myself for going to sleep: O that I should go to sleep and let him go! Why did I not hold him fast? I could say indeed, "Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? Tell him that I am sick of love." Failing to find his sensible presence, I became very low. O! I had thought the conflict was over, and that I had nothing left to do but to praise him whilst I had any being. I thought I had done with fears and sinkings; but no. I now even doubted whether all I had passed through was real. I had occasion to go to a market town; and this becoming miserable again, after I had been so happy, I could not comprehend. I had a distance to walk; and on the road I beheld, as it were, all my sins pass before my view,—a black catalogue indeed. I sighed, and groaned, and prayed, whilst it was as if my throat would almost close up. O the weight of my sins! I thought people looked at me very intensely. I hoped, "Surely they don't see the mark of the beast on my forehead." Well, I determined to find a Christian woman who lived in the place, and ask her if she could tell how it was that, after such a blessing, I should be miserable again so soon, and that also on account of my sins; so with my heavy load I went to the house; but she had left. I turned up the street, and said, "Here is a refuge; this has failed me indeed;" and in this state these words came to my soul: "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I" (O what a stress on the I) "and I will give you rest." I felt the burden of my sins pass away from my conscience like a weight of lead from my heart. I was like another creature, body and soul; for I could scarcely eat that morning, because of my trouble; but my appetite for food came, and my feelings were, "O that I was in a wood, where no eye could see me, or human ear hear me! I would shout to the praise of his dear name, who has pardoned my sins, and set me free."

I longed much after this for what we termed "preaching Sabbath" to come, in hopes that the Lord by his servant would confirm in my soul what had taken place as God's work; for now it was especially with me great enjoyment or many fears; and the Lord answered my prayers; for I had a most blessed hearing time, under my spiritual father Mr. P., from Isa. li. 1. I do not say he went into things exactly as I had passed through them, but he showed what it was to be lost and ruined in self and saved in the Lord Jesus Christ; and that was enough for me. My full soul could scarcely contain the gratitude, love, and praise that filled it.

I hastened through the street to the house of a friend, went into their parlour, fell on my knees, and thanked the Lord and blessed and praised him for the preached word, that had confirmed my soul that the work was of God, and that I was his and he was mine for

ever. Whether overheard by human ears or not, I felt I must pour out my gratitude and praise. "Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest."

After this, for some time, Jesus Christ was indeed the joy of my heart. What a time of blessed communion I had with him; and though not without fresh temptations and fears, yet, by the witness of the Spirit with my spirit, I had such seasons of blessed assurance of my eternal standing in him that, like David, I said in my prosperity, "I shall never be moved;" for I verily thought within myself, "Whatever befall me, the remembrance of this will always be enough." How different I have found it.

One of these blessed seasons has just come with freshness into my soul. I was lying on my bed, pondering on these things, and feeling it to be a wonder of wonders that I was saved; for I never did anything but provoke the Lord to have nothing to do with me; when he spoke these words to me: "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." I replied, "True, Lord I chose all things before thee." What a day I spent! O those words: "I have chosen you," coming again and again to my soul, with the love and power with which Jesus speaks. I walked about this earth as if I had no kindred with its things. My affections were in heaven alone, blessing and praising his ever-adorable name. When in my own spirit, like James and John, I could have asked for fire to consume my enemies; but now I said, "Lord, I ask no vengeance but this, that they might know the power of thy love." My soul, under this particular blessing, seemed to rise to the very height of obeying that precept of praying for my enemies.

Although it is more than ten years since the above exercises of my soul, I had not put one word upon paper concerning them; but I have been enabled to call upon the Spirit, in dependance upon him, and I can say that in a remarkable manner it has been brought to my mind and memory. As it came, so I wrote. I have indeed had an entrance into the promise: "He shall bring all things to your remembrance."

March 16th, 1865.

R. H.

[The writer of the above is a member of the church at Oakham, and much esteemed and loved by his late pastor and ever affectionate friend,—THE EDITOR.]

GOD has many sharp-cutting instruments and rough files for polishing his jewels, and those who need most polishing he has most often his tools upon.—*Leighton*.

AN eternal salvation of one soul is of greater importance, and big with greater events, than the temporal salvation of a whole kingdom, though it were for the space of ten thousand ages; because there will come up a point, an instant in eternity, when that one soul shall have existed as many ages as all the individuals of a whole kingdom, ranged in close succession, will in the whole have existed in the space of ten thousand ages. Therefore our soul is capable of a larger share of happiness or misery throughout an endless eternity, for that will still be before it, more than a whole kingdom is capable of in ten thousand ages.—*Doddridge*.

DIARY OF JOHN RUSK.

Thursday, October 1st, 1807.—I found very sharp inward trials at breakfast-time, and after this, at times, felt a little comfortable; but at tea-time was greatly distressed. I hardly could bear it. In prayer I found much support, but between six and seven I was taken very sick, so that what with the burden of my mind and sickness I was almost distracted. God hides his face, and light shows me what I am. Satan's temptations come on, and then the distress is unbearable. "Think it not strange," says Peter.

Saturday, October 3rd, 1807.—Blessed be God, I have found the revivings of hope this day. I have been thinking that God is weaning me more and more from comfort; for I have long enjoyed the light of his countenance; but as Christ was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, so he has left us an example that we should follow his steps. "Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of;" "Then was Jesus led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil;" and "it is through much tribulation," &c.

Now I will mention several reasons why I have been thus tried, and the various uses this trial has been to me, and may be to many others that I know:

1. I grew spiritually proud. My heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord. Then I have had to be humbled in the dust, that I might take the lowest room.
2. I found a deal of lightness or levity, but this has brought me to think soberly.
3. There were many idols set up, and I found it hard to part with them; but this has been the means of pulling them down.
4. I was very much for buying and reading authors to the neglect of God's word; but this has made me search the Scriptures.
5. I was for picking and choosing, and sometimes quarrelling with God's minister, making great imaginary advances towards the pulpit; but now much glad of one crumb that falls from our Master's table, and very thankful to sit in the pew.
6. I had got so well fed that I had not the feeling I should have for the weak of God's family; but since this I would be thankful to be, as David says, even a door-keeper at the house of the Lord.
7. I found the lusts of the flesh grow very strong; but this has very much deadened me to that, as it did the incestuous person, to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, &c.
8. It has showed me how very low God can bring me, and yet raise me up again. "When," says David, "my foot slipped, thy mercy, O Lord, held me up;" and he says, "God takes pleasure in them that fear him and them that hope in his mercy."
9. I had been very strong in the Lord and the power of his might; and says Paul, such are to bear, not merely bear with, but *bear* or be exercised with the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves.
10. I have learned what a power Satan has, and that none but God can deliver me from him.
11. It has made me search for those promises that God has given, as that he would lift up a standard against him, that he would make a way for our escape, that we should resist him in the faith, and overcome him by the blood of the Lamb; that he would give me power to

tread on serpents, &c.; and I have been forced to plead these promises from a sense of want. 12. It has given me to see what few know—what it is to be lost, for Christ was only sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Thus, you see, it has been of use to me, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." I desire now to be very thankful for the least gleam of hope, knowing myself to be utterly unworthy of the notice of God, and to acknowledge "by the grace of God, I am what I am."

May the Lord keep me in this frame, that, like Jesus in some measure, I may be lowly in heart.

It is very remarkable what temptations I have to despair, which seem to continue with me, more or less; for though I got so great a deliverance, yet Satan has laboured hard again and again. On Wednesday, October 7th, I was very low indeed. I came home in the evening to read; but no book seemed to suit my case. When I had looked over several, I went down stairs. At supper I made sad complaints, for I was sore troubled that all my profession would come to nought. My wife read Psalm xxx., after which I gave out that hymn in Mr. Hart's,

"Ye tempted souls, reflect," &c.

When we came to the words:

"If thou'rt the Son of God,"

and the two following verses, I burst out in tears, which is a rare thing with me; but I could not help it; and I assure you I found great relief. My burden was greatly removed, and much support was given me; so that I think I have not sunk so low since.

Now this is a kind of food for the soul; as David says, "My tears have been my meat, while they continually say unto me, Where is now thy God?" I have been much troubled with a pain in my head, and Satan has often suggested to me when I have found it shoot, "There, now; this is the beginning of madness;" but, blessed be God, I am not so low to night. This is Thursday evening, October 8th. O how the Lord Jesus teaches me momentary dependance.

Monday, October 12th.—O with what delight I sit down to write this evening the experience I had last night. You may read in what I have written the violent temptation I have been under to despair. Well; it followed me all day on Sunday. In the morning all through the service I found a shooting in my head, and Satan kept suggesting it was madness; but in the evening Mr. Huntington preached from Psalm xviii. 27: "For thou wilt save the afflicted people, but wilt bring down high looks;" and God so blessed it to my soul that when it was over I looked in my heart and found a solid peace. The devil was off. I went home in the coach with five more of God's blessed tried family; and truly I found the coach a little heaven. I told them I believed we should all meet in glory and sing, "Salvation to God and the Lamb for ever;" that I was a living witness of God's faithfulness; that he had stretched forth his almighty arm and saved me. Every time I spoke, I kept looking within, and the work was brighter and brighter. I kept looking for the devil, but he was gone. I told them he was in sackcloth and ashes; that I loved them

all; that I loved Mr. Huntington, Mr. Brook, Mr. Jenkins, all at Providence, Monkwel Street, and all the dear tried family of God. I found a deal of joy, and said I could preach a good sermon. In short, I was the chief speaker; and the more I spoke the less I was in my own eyes. I wished from my soul the coach had four miles to go or else to go all night. I parted from these friends with reluctance; and when I went to bed, I said, "This is my experience this night:

"I lay me down and sweetly sleep;
For I have peace with God."

All this day I have found a blessed peace, and told a person if there was no other heaven than what I found, it would not be a bad one.

Thus my most blessed dear Saviour condescended to send me help from the sanctuary and strengthen me out of Zion.

JOHN RUSK.

[We wish to call special attention to the fruits and effects of trial and temptation, as mentioned in the above piece of J. Rusk's, as we think them truly excellent from their clearness, simplicity, conciseness, comprehensiveness, and, above all, their experimental reality and truth. What holy wisdom was given to the poor sail-maker!—Ed.]

THE GOOD OLD WAY.

Judging from my old friend's last letter, it would seem that his answering my letters to him forms one part of the heavy tempest that lies upon him; in consequence of which he had nearly concluded to drop this part of his cross, by ceasing to write. This, however, he has not done, but has tried to check my forwardness in scribbling by his long silence; and no doubt this would have been sufficient for any but fools. Permit me just to say, before I dismiss this part of my subject, if indeed you find our correspondence a burden, drop it. It is not my wish to add one particle to your cross; and you may depend upon it no one from me will know of your silence. This will be one thing, among many others, that I shall ponder in my mind.

I am not at all surprised at the deep surges you are called to pass through, nor of your sinking by fathoms in despondency. I know more of these things than you do; yet, blessed be God, I believe the vessel in which we are embarked will outride every storm, and land us safe at last. We are not far from the destined port. It is true I cannot see it; but my feelings tell me I am not far from land. Sometimes my dear Jesus seems to be asleep in the ship. At these seasons I row hard, and finally experience the harder I row the deeper I sink; and really at times there appear only a few hairs of my head for the Saviour to lay hold of; but he brings his people here, that they may sensibly feel it, not merely prate about it as many do, that salvation is of God.

I went to glean yesterday, but not one ear was let fall for me. On the contrary, I was miserable with a witness. In the evening I was enabled to lay my case before the Lord. I told him, what

he well knew, the distress of my soul, and he was pleased to favour me with a little relief; so that I was holpen with a little help, and had a measure of liberty in family prayer. Blessed be his name for a single crumb. O that you and I could dwell more upon the goodness, faithfulness, and loving-kindness of the Lord, upon the finished work of the glorious Redeemer. To this we are exhorted, and it is in this field only we find real consolation.

But my friend tells me I have more visits and times of rejoicing than he has. This assertion is doubtful; but my desire and prayer to God is, that I may not be suffered to dishonour him, and please the devil, by talking about the trash of the latter, and neglecting to mention the kindness of the former, who has brought me through fire, and through water, and has promised to land me on the wealthy place. Thus much he has also done for my much-esteemed friend Morris, which he cannot deny. At any rate he dare not deny it to me, when he knows in his conscience that I have witnessed numerous feasts of love, which he has had from the presence of him whom his soul loves; and in this I was not deceived, for of many of these feasts I have actually partaken; so that indeed and of a truth the butcher of Lewes and the collector of Manchester have in days that are past been together at the banquet of love, and at such seasons could say with the good old man, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servants depart in peace, according to thy word, for our eyes have seen thy salvation;" though, something like that good man, we have known what it was to wait "for the consolation of Israel." We both know that long and anxious waiting makes the blessing more precious; and though we may never enjoy such seasons together again in the flesh, the Lord has promised where he is, there his servants shall be; consequently we shall meet shortly. Then all your burdens will be for ever removed, letter-writing to your old friend among the rest.

I had a letter from the doctor about a month ago. His health was then as usual. I was truly sorry to hear of his indisposition. His removal from this vain world, though gain to him, will be a serious loss, speaking after the manner of men, to Christ's little flock, particularly to such as he stately and occasionally labours among. The Lord seems to be visiting these with very severe judgments; but may you and I be found submissive at his feet. That is a good way, the Spirit's own work. I shall be truly glad to hear of the doctor's recovery. Indeed I shall be thankful to hear how he goes on.

Yours sincerely,

Manchester, July 5, 1813.

W. HUDSON.

LIFE AND LIGHT.—As much as Lazarus coming out of his grave and feeling himself restored to life differed from those who only saw the miracle or believed the fact when told them, so great is the difference between a soul's real coming out of himself and feeling the righteousness of Christ imputed to him by the precious faith of God's elect and a man's bare believing the doctrine of imputed righteousness, because he sees it contained in Scripture, or assenting to the truth of it when proposed to his understanding by others.—*Hart.*

INQUIRIES.

INQUIRY 1.

Dear Mr. Editor,—Will you give me your views on the following scriptures?

In Luke xxii. 19. Christ "took bread and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me."

But we read, John xix. 33-36: "But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they brake not his legs." "For these things were done, that the scripture might be fulfilled: A bone of him shall not be broken." What I desire to know is, How was the broken bread typical of Christ's body, when a "bone of him was not broken?" His body was bruised, lacerated, but not broken. My desire in asking your views is to know the truth. Sincerely yours,
Eagle, Canada West, Aug. 24, 1865. J. S. M^cC.

ANSWER.

We do not see any great difficulty in reconciling the breaking of the bread with the not breaking of the bone. Breaking the bread is a symbolical action, and is an emblem of the body of Christ as broken by the sufferings which he endured when he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. The apostle, recording the institution of the Lord's Supper by divine revelation, thus speaks: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread. And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you. This do in remembrance of me." (1 Cor. xi. 23, 24.) Thus we have the Lord's own words that his body was broken. But how? His flesh was broken by blows, especially by the cruel scourging which he endured at the command of Pilate, by the thorns of his crown, by the nails of the cross, and by the spear of the Roman soldier; and his body was separated from his soul, and thus, in a sense, broken. His heart, too, was broken; not, indeed, literally, as some have erroneously said, but spiritually; for he cried: "Reproach hath broken my heart;" (Ps. lxxix. 20;) and again, "My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels." (Ps. xxii. 14.) "He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities." Yea, "it pleased the Lord to bruise him and put him to grief." (Isa. liii. 5, 10.) Now, all these sufferings of body and soul, these bruising, are aptly represented by the breaking of the bread.

But this does not at all militate against, or clash with, a bone of him not being broken. The body might be broken in the sense that we have given it without any breaking of the bones. There was a necessity to show that the Lord laid down his life as a voluntary act, and that it was not taken from him by violence, as he himself beautifully said: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This com-

mandment have I received of my Father." (John x. 17, 18.) In order then to show that it was not the cross, so to speak, which killed him, but that he died by a voluntary act, laying down his life which no man could take from him, he breathed out his spirit before the soldiers came. There seems to be a holy propriety in this. God, if we may so speak, would not suffer the body of Jesus to be needlessly mangled. It was requisite to the sacrifice that his blood should be shed, for "without shedding of blood there is no remission;" and the death of the victim was indispensable to the integrity and completeness of the offering. By the nails in the hands and feet, and by the piercing of the side, his precious blood was shed, and by his voluntary death the sacrifice was completed; but there was no need that his sacred body should be mangled after death by any breaking of the bones. The work was finished, the sacrifice fully offered, sin put away, the law fulfilled, justice satisfied, Satan overthrown, the church saved, and God glorified. Now it would not have been seemly when all was thus accomplished, that the bones of this precious body should be broken. The thieves were malefactors, and though one was saved by sovereign grace, yet they "received the due reward of their deeds." (Luke xxiii. 41.) But was it not becoming, that, though the malicious Jews crucified him between the two thieves, some distinction should be made between the body of the holy, harmless Son of God and these wretches? The indignity then put upon them was not suffered to be inflicted on him. His body was to be taken care of. A burial place was already provided for it in a garden; and a sepulchre, wherein never man before was laid, was ready to receive the body of Jesus, that it might lie there till the morning of the resurrection. Then it arose bearing no marks but those of the nails in the feet and hands, and of the spear in the side—a glorious body, such as now sits in all its completeness and integrity at the right hand of the Father.

This was typified by the paschal Lamb, of which not a bone was to be broken; (Exod. xii. 46; Num. ix. 12;) and harmonises with the declaration, "He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken." (Ps. xxxiv. 20.) Thus there is no discrepancy between the breaking of the bread and the non-breaking of the bone. All emblems are necessarily imperfect, and must not be pressed beyond their leading intention. Breaking the bread is symbolical of the broken body of Jesus; and besides, unless the bread were broken, there could be no proper and emblematic distribution of it to those who partake of the Lord's supper.

INQUIRY 2.

Dear Mr. Editor,—Will you be so kind as to give an answer to the following inquiry:

If a man has been sitting under the sound of the gospel, and hearing it say five years, and it has produced no effect upon his conscience, but only hardened him, would it be well for him to continue to go on hearing it, or to keep at home?

Your thoughts would oblige A CONSTANT READER.

ANSWER.

Yours is a singular inquiry, though not a singular case. But is it altogether as bad with you as you think or fear it is? You say that the hearing of the gospel has produced no effect upon your conscience, but only hardened you. But what makes you feel this hardness? There must be light before we can see, and life before we can feel. You seem to see that the hearing of the gospel does not work the expected effect on your heart, and to feel that it rather hardens than softens it. This may be the light of life in your soul, or the beginning of better things. You do not, and indeed cannot, tell us all your feelings; and there may be more life and feeling working in your conscience than you would own even to yourself, or have ventured to speak of to us. At any rate, do not give up your attendance on the preached word; for this is to give way to Satan, who may be thus tempting you to stay away from the house of prayer, lest it increase your damnation as a gospel-hardened wretch. But this you are not if you feel your hardness, and sigh over it, and pray against it. Thus there may be hope in Israel concerning this thing. You remember the figure of the dry bones in Ezekiel xxxvii.: "They were very dry;" and behold, they said, as if conscious of it: "Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts." (v. 11.) But these were men's thoughts, not God's thoughts. By and by, "there was a noise, and, behold, a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone." Now you may have got so far as to have heard the sound of the gospel, as a noise, if no more. You are shaken as to the goodness of your state; some sense and feeling of it have come together. Now what next? Is there no cry in your soul: "Come, O breath, and breathe upon me that I may live?" Have you no desires that the blessed Spirit would work with the word, and make it life and spirit to your soul? This would be a token for good, and an intimation that matters are not so bad with you as you fear. At any rate, do not forsake the house of prayer, a preached gospel, and the assemblies of the saints. Abraham's servant was "in the way when the Lord led him to the house of his master's brethren." (Gen. xxiv. 27.) Keep, then, your place; still continue hearing the word. The time may come, and may it come speedily, when power will attend the word to your soul, and then you will bless God that you were not permitted to yield to the tempter, but were enabled to follow the right path. You are not the only one so situated, and that is the reason why we have answered your inquiry.

O ETERNAL Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, is it possible for me to forget the time when thou didst apply the sweet balsam of redeeming love to my fainting, weary, heavy-laden soul? When, overwhelmed with horrible terrors and black despair, thou didst most graciously and almost instantaneously shine upon my heart, filling me with joy and peace in believing;" yea, with joy unspeakable and full of glory," and causing me to abound in hope through thy own power.—*Sir Richard Hill.*

MEDITATIONS ON VARIOUS IMPORTANT POINTS
OF OUR MOST HOLY FAITH.

I.

THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL.

AMONG the various subjects of divine truth which at different times have come before our mind, and more or less occupied our thoughts, that of the ministry has not been the least frequent or the least important. As we have ourselves been engaged in it for more than thirty years, and have thus known something experimentally of its cares and anxieties as well as of its blessings and benefits, we may hope, with the Lord's help and blessing, to examine the subject not only as presented to our view in the Scriptures of truth, but be able to bring some lengthened experience to bear upon its consideration, and thus handle it not as a mere question of doctrine or speculation, but as a matter of personal interest and practical knowledge and possession. We have felt inclined, therefore, to bring the subject before our readers as a part of those Meditations which we have ventured, in the strength of the Lord, for some little time past, to cast as our mite into his treasury.

It is indeed a most difficult and delicate subject rightly to handle, and a feeling sense of this difficulty and of our own inability to treat it with that clearness and fulness, that faithfulness and decision, that authority and power, which it demands and deserves, would have almost deterred us even now from making the attempt, had we not hoped to experience the same gracious help from the Lord in unfolding it which, we trust, has been given to us upon the other branches of divine truth which we have thus far brought before our readers, and the same kind consideration and patient indulgence from them. We shall, therefore, venture forthwith to launch our little bark, freighted with many cares as well as many treasures, and spread our sail to waft it over a not altogether unknown sea; and though we may meet storms and cross currents, side winds and threatening gales by the way, may the gracious Lord guide us with his eye and direct us by his word. May our eye be single to his glory and his people's good; may the Scriptures be our chart, and a personal, experimental knowledge of the truth our compass; may no seductive breezes or a desire to sail in smoother waters divert us from our course; and, above all, may the blessed Spirit grant a favourable gale, that we may reach the desired haven—the approbation of God in our own conscience, and a place for his truth in the consciences of our gracious readers.

In handling any subject, especially when it is both long and difficult, some degree of order seems requisite. Order is to a subject what it is to our books, letters, papers, and even the commonest implements of the factory or the forge and the furniture of the parlour or the kitchen, not to say the accounts of the merchant or the goods of the tradesman. "Order," says the poet, "is heaven's first law;" and a higher authority than he, viewing with enlightened eye the order of God as displayed in creation, and

speaking with inspired tongue, has declared: "Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth; they continue this day according to thine ordinances; for all are thy servants." (Ps. cxix. 90, 91.)

But though we intend to lay down, and hope to preserve, some such orderly arrangement of our subject as may preserve us from confusion and repetition, yet we do not mean thereby to tie ourselves rigorously down to a certain fixed path. A marked out, definite road is necessary to reach safely and comfortably the end of a journey; but it need not be as straight and as level as a railway, still less so hard and so confined—the way so rigid, the transit so rapid. It may wind through a wood, or steal through shady hedges where the flowers bloom and the birds sing; it may stretch over the breezy heath where the lark soars and the sheep-bell tinkles, and may yield quiet resting places during sun or shower, or even for a night's abode, without hurrying us on, amid clouds of steam and smoke, to our destination. Pardon this little sportive spurt. It may have a deeper meaning than you may attach to it; it may be an emblem of our journeying together, and the incidents of the way in our present subject of meditation. Our gracious Lord has not disdained such figurative language in the invitation given to his beloved bride: "Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth; there will I give thee my loves." (Song Sol. vii. 11, 12.)

We shall, therefore, hope to consider our subject under these five points of view.

I. *The foundation of the ministry of the gospel.*

II. *Its nature and character.*

III. *The ends for which it was established.*

IV. *The promised blessings which accompany it.*

V. *Its trials and exercises, with its comforts and encouragements.*

Before, however, we launch our ship, it may be as well to dispose of an objection which may present itself to some of our readers—the comparative narrowness of the question. They may say, "Such a subject as you now propose to handle is limited to a few, comparatively, of the Lord's people. None are interested in it but ministers, who, however highly we may esteem them in love for their work's sake, form but a small part of your readers. Why do you not take some subject of a wider range, in which we shall all feel a general interest?" With your leave, kind objector, the matter does not stand exactly as you have put it. The subject is of wider interest than may at first sight appear. It is true that the ministers of experimental truth are few, and, sad to say, getting every day fewer and fewer, and their hearers many. But have not their hearers an equal if not a greater interest in the ministry than the ministers themselves? If you were a pauper, and depended on alms for a supply of bread, would the nature, quality, and quantity of the loaves which were given be of no interest to you? Who would have the greater interest in the bread distribution—the bread

distributor or the bread eater? So, as in some measure dependent on the ministry for a supply of the bread of life, is it nothing to you whether you get a loaf or a stone? sound, solid, nourishing bread, or an indigestible lump which hunger itself can scarcely persuade you to touch or taste? Thus the hearer has really quite as much an interest in the subject of the ministry as the minister himself; for if he has no personal experience of the exercises and blessings of the preacher, he has of the exercises of a soul when starved under it, and of the blessings of a soul when under it comforted and fed.

We shall now, therefore, without farther preface, address ourselves to our subject, "The Ministry of the Gospel;" and our first point shall be to show,

I. The *foundation* on which it rests.

The most prominent feature of the gospel ministry is, that it is peculiarly an institution and an *ordinance of the New Testament*.

Instruction in the truth was always requisite for its preservation on earth. That it might not die with the individual or the generation to which it was first revealed, it was absolutely necessary, unless God should again and again discover it afresh, which would not have been in harmony with his plans as we find them, either in providence or in grace, that the father should hand it down to the son. This patriarchal mode was, in consequence, the earliest, as it was the simplest. We find, therefore, the Lord thus speaking of Abraham: "And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." (Gen. xviii. 17-19.) One of the main purposes of God in the call of Abraham was to make known in him and by him his truth, and by giving him a godly seed, in whom it might be maintained, as Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, to preserve it from that loss and corruption which it had suffered since the time of Noah, through the rise and prevalence of idolatry involving the descendants of Shem, and even the immediate ancestors of Abraham. (Gen. xxxi. 30; Josh. xxiv. 2.) This patriarchal method was preserved down to the time of the Exodus from Egypt, when the Lord made a covenant at Sinai with the children of Israel, and a new mode of divine instruction was instituted and inaugurated. A written word was given; sacrifices and priesthood were, not indeed for the first time instituted, but put upon a new foundation; a tabernacle set up, and daily ministrations in it prescribed, and an order of men specially set apart to teach the people, as the Lord speaks by Malachi: "And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the Lord of hosts. My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was

not found in his lips; he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts." (Mal. ii. 4-7.) By this written code of laws, by these sacrifices, and by the Levitical priesthood, the people were instructed; and, as the apostle speaks, had the gospel preached unto them: "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." (Heb. iv. 2.) Thus the children of Israel had, in a sense, a preached gospel given to them; and yet, as we shall see by and by, quite distinct from the ministry of the gospel now existing as a New Testament ordinance. After they had reached and been settled in the land of Canaan for a considerable time, as the priesthood had become corrupt, (1 Sam. ii. 22-36,) and idolatry very prevalent, (Judges ii. 11-13, 17; iii. 6; xvii. 3, 4,) it pleased God to raise up a new order of men, commencing with Samuel, who continued to the close of the Old Testament canon, viz., the *prophets*, through whom the Lord himself specially spoke to the people. Then came the reading of the law and of the prophets in the synagogues, commenced by Ezra,* which we find still carried on in the time of our Lord.

We have thus hastily sketched the mode of instruction under the Old dispensation, that it may help to throw a clearer, broader light on that instituted and enjoined in the New.

We have laid it down as a primary, fundamental element of the ministry of the gospel that it is purely an institution and an ordinance of the New Testament. In fact, there were no good tidings to preach until the promised Seed was come, and by his death and resurrection had finished the transgression and made an end of sin, had made reconciliation for iniquity, brought in everlasting righteousness, and sealed up (that is, by accomplishing, put an attesting seal upon) the vision and prophecy, and was anointed as the most holy by his exaltation to the right hand of God. (Dan. ix. 24.) There was everything to prophesy, but nothing to preach. But when the work was finished which the Father had given him to do, when he had put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, then there was room for a world-wide proclamation of the joyful tidings which Paul preached at Antioch in Pisidia: "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts xiii. 38, 39.) But before we proceed to prove the truth of our assertion by testimonies from the word of God, let us drop a few words as to the *foundation* itself, for that is the point in hand, and which, therefore, we desire to make as clear and firm as possible.

* At first the law only was read; but as that practice was in the time of Antiochus prohibited, and nearly all the copies seized and destroyed, the reading of the prophets was introduced, which, when Mattathias, the father of Judas Maccabeus, restored the reading of the law, (B.C. 166,) was still continued, the former being read at one part of the service, and the latter at the other.

The death, resurrection, ascension, and glorification of the blessed Lord, as they are the subject, so are they the foundation of the ministry of the gospel. A moment's consideration will show this. But for his death, there could have been no propitiation for sin; therefore no proclamation of reconciliation, pardon, and peace for those who believe in his name. But for his resurrection, there could have been no open, visible declaration that he was the Son of God with power, (Rom. i. 4,) and no justification; (Rom. iv. 25;) therefore no preaching Jesus as the Son of the Father in truth and love, no testifying how a sinner is justified by his righteousness; for "if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." (1 Cor. xv. 17.) But for his ascension, there could have been no intercession at the right hand of the Father; therefore no Mediator to be set forth between God and men, (1 Tim. ii. 5,) and no message from, no access unto the Father. (Eph. ii. 18.) Unless he had been glorified, he would not have received the Spirit as a gift for us; (John vii. 39; xvi. 7, 13-16;) therefore there would have been no power of the Holy Ghost to make the ministry of the gospel effectual to the calling of sinners or the comforting of saints. We see, therefore, how the foundation of the ministry of the gospel is laid in the death, resurrection, ascension, and glorification of the Lord Jesus.

But you will, perhaps, say, "Was not the gospel preached before the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, not only typically and ceremonially, as you have pointed out under the Old Testament, but in the days of Christ, before his death and resurrection?" Yes; most certainly, both by the Lord himself and by his disciples; for we read: "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom." (Matt. iv. 23.) The apostle, therefore, writes: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?" (Heb. ii. 3.) So also the Lord sent forth the twelve apostles, at a very early period of his ministry, to "go and preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. x. 7.) But all this was merely in a foreview of his death and resurrection, and as it were a preparation for it, and an intimation of its character and nature, as certain good news to be in due time brought. In this way it much resembled—resembled, we say, for it was not the same as, the ministry of John the Baptist, whose mission was to prepare the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight, as the angel testified of him: "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke i. 17.) So the Lord's ministry, and that of his disciples, till after his ascension, was a ministry of preparation. But a preparation for an event is not the same thing as the event itself, any more than the preparation for the last supper (Luke xxii. 7-13) was the same thing as Jesus sitting down and breaking bread to the disciples.

It was not, then, till after his resurrection that the ministry of the gospel was instituted as a permanent ordinance of the New Testament; and its gracious and glorious charter we may read in those memorable words which the Lord spake unto his disciples just before his ascension into heaven: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, 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, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matt. xxviii. 18-20.) "Go and teach" (or "make disciples of" —margin) "all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This was the divine command, this the authoritative institution of the ministry of the gospel. And the attendant promise both testifies to its permanence and insures its blessing: "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." Almost similar is the language of Mark, recording the same commission: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark xvi. 15, 16.)

But it will be observed, that though this was the institution of the ministry of the gospel, yet it was not to commence at once. The parting words of the Lord, as recorded by Luke, clearly show this: "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." (Luke xxiv. 45-49.) Thus, though the apostles were already divinely commissioned, the commission was not to take effect or be acted upon till the Holy Ghost, as a fruit of Christ's glorification, was poured out. We, therefore, read in that last interview with his disciples before his ascension, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles: "And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." (Acts i. 4, 5.)

Having thus seen the foundation of the ministry of the gospel, first as laid in the death, resurrection, ascension, and glorification of the Lord Jesus, and secondly as instituted by the Lord himself after his resurrection, we shall perhaps be better prepared to consider some other scriptures which testify to the same purport. One of the most clear and striking is that of the apostle in the Epistle to the Ephesians, iv. 7-16. As we shall have occasion to dwell much upon that portion of the word, we merely quote a part of it for the

present, as confirming what we have already advanced as the foundation of the Christian ministry: "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." (Eph. iv. 8-12.) The apostle here quotes Ps. lxxviii. 18, with a little verbal alteration which is of no consequence, as the meaning is the same, for the Lord received that he might give. Without these gifts of the Holy Ghost received by him and given to us, the ministry would have been merely in word, without efficacy or power; a barren, unprofitable proclamation, not in itself, but barren to the souls of men as too deaf to hear it, too blind to see it, too dead to feel it.

We thus see four leading points in connection with the source and origin of the gospel ministry: 1. Its *foundation* in the death, resurrection, ascension, and glorification of the Lord Jesus; 2. Its *institution* by the Lord just before his ascension; 3. Its *permanence* as a standing ordinance of the New Testament; 4. Its *power* as accompanied by the Holy Ghost to the souls of men. We find, therefore, that the disciples, according to their Lord's command, waited at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. They kept together as a little band, and "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication," but did nothing except choose by lot a successor to Judas that he might take part of the ministry and apostleship from which that traitor by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. (Acts i. 14-26.) But now comes the setting up of the ministry of the gospel as a visible fact, a realisation of the promise given to the disciples by their risen Lord: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, 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 it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts ii. 1-4.) The sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, the cloven tongues of fire sitting upon each of them, their speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance, were so many visible signs and marks that the Holy Ghost was come upon them. And what was the effect? The opening of the mouth to preach the word: "Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and said unto them," &c. This was the first gospel sermon preached upon earth. Then, for the first time, did a gospel minister stand forth as an ambassador of Christ divinely commissioned, spiritually equipped, and enabled to preach Christ crucified, Christ risen, Christ exalted, Christ as having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, and having visibly shed him forth in his gifts and graces. And what

was the effect of that first gospel sermon by a gospel minister? The call of three thousand souls! O what a testimony to the power of a preached gospel. What a demonstration that Jesus was at the right hand of the Father. What a visible fruit of his intercession and mediation. Before this day there was no preaching, in the New Testament sense of the word, but now there was good news to tell to poor perishing sinners, whether Jew or Gentile; for he who is our peace had made both one, and broken down the middle wall of partition between them. Now the types were all fulfilled, the sacrifices of the law accomplished in the one great sacrifice, and therefore useless and virtually abrogated; and the legal dispensation come to an end by the bringing in of a new and better covenant. There was now an open field in which to preach the glad tidings of salvation, for the door of mercy was set open to the Gentiles, as intimated by the gift of tongues, and in pursuance of the Lord's command to go and teach all nations. Poor Gentile sinners, who had been aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world, were now made nigh by the blood of Christ (Eph. ii. 12-13.) And those who were sometime alienated and enemies in their mind by wicked works he had reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present them holy and unblameable and unreprouceable in his sight. (Col. i. 21, 22.) It is true that in harmony with all his dealings with Israel, after the flesh, to them the gospel was first preached, as Peter declared: "Ye are the children of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first, God having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." (Acts iii. 25, 26.) But they, except a remnant according to the election of grace, (Rom. xi. 5,) rejected the gospel, blasphemed its doctrines and divine Author, persecuted its preachers, and filling up the measure of their sins, soon brought upon themselves swift destruction. But O what a confirmation did God give to those who by grace received it, that the gospel was a message from himself. The miracles which the apostles wrought (Acts iii. 1-8; v. 12-16; ix. 36-41; xiv. 8-10,) the divers tongues with which they spake; (1 Cor. xiv. 18;) the sufferings which they endured with such holy joy; (Acts v. 40, 41; xvi. 24, 25;) their undaunted boldness and faithfulness; (Acts iv. 8-20; v. 29-32;) and above all, the power and authority which attended their word; (Acts vi. 10; viii. 5-8; xi. 21-24; 1 Thess. i. 5-10;) all proved that the gospel which they preached was from God, and that he had commissioned and qualified them to preach it. What they preached we shall see more clearly and fully when we come to our second point, *the nature and character of the gospel*. At present we are engaged with the *foundation*, which we desire to make as plain and clear as we can, not only as affording a strong and broad basis for the rest of the superstructure which we hope to build upon it, but for the comfort and encouragement of the servants of God, who are often cast down by the trials and temptations of the ministry, a sense of their ina-

bility, and the want of that success in it which is the crown of all their labours. Now it may be good for them to consider, with the Lord's help and blessing, the foundation on which their ministry rests. And we would direct their attention to the four points which we have thus far brought forward.

1. First, let them consider that the *foundation* of their ministry is laid in the death, resurrection, ascension, and glorification of the Son of God. What strength and firmness are here. What an immoveable foundation; for let them bear in mind that the foundation of their ministry is the same as that which God has laid in Zion. For was not this the foundation of Paul's ministry? "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation; and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. iii. 10, 11.) So it is of ours, if we preach Paul's gospel with any measure of Paul's grace. If we have been allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel; (1 Thess. ii. 4;) if God has committed unto us ("put in us," *margin*) the word of reconciliation; (2 Cor. v. 19;) if he has in any measure separated us unto the gospel of God, (Rom. i. 1,) the foundation of our ministry is already laid for us. And O what a foundation. Nothing less than the Son of God, as crucified, as risen from the dead, as gone up on high, as even now at the right hand of the Father interceding for us.

2. And consider also its *institution*. No command of man, ye servants of God, no invention or institution of Pope or prince, no appointment of prime minister or bishop, has commissioned you to preach the gospel. The Lord himself, the risen Jesus, the great Head of the Church has appointed that the gospel should be preached, that a proclamation might be made of his Person and work, blood and obedience, grace and glory, that those who believe might be saved.

3. Consider, further, the *permanence* of the gospel ministry, and the promise which ensures not only its continuance, but its ever-abiding blessing: "And lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." The ministry of the gospel did not die with the apostles. Like the fire upon the brazen altar, like the light in the holy place, it was never to be quenched or put out, sink down for want of fuel, or die out for lack of oil. "The end of the world" is not yet come. Until that time, then, God shall never want a servant, Christ an ambassador, or the church a minister. With a little change we may adopt the words of Berridge on the death of Whitefield:

"As one Elijah dies,
True prophet of the Lord,
Shall some Elisha rise,
To blaze the gospel word.
And fast as sheep to Jesus go,
Shall lambs recruit his folds below."

This is your strength, hope, and confidence, ye servants of God, that the Lord is with you. What the angel of the Lord said to Gideon, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour," may be said to

and of you. And if any, in the despondency of his heart say, "If the Lord be with me, why is all this befallen me, and where be all the miracles which our fathers told us?" may the gracious Lord look upon him in all the beauty, blessedness, and strength-giving light of his glorious countenance, and say, "Go in this my might. Have not I sent thee?" (Judges vi. 12-14.)

4. And lastly, may they bear in mind the *power* which the Lord has promised shall accompany his word: "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isa. lv. 10, 11.) The gospel still is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." (Rom. i. 16.) And as we witness the power which attends it still to the souls of men, we may say with the apostle: "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." (1 Thess. ii. 13.) It is true that we are fallen on evil days, when little power for the most part attends the preached gospel. And yet there may be more good done than we are aware of, or are permitted to see. Much of the blessing that the word is made to the people of God is hidden, wisely hidden, from the servants of the Lord. Pride is so deep and so fruitful a root that, to hide pride from man, many of the servants of God are not permitted to see the fruit of their own labours, or to harvest their own crop. O that those whom the Lord has himself taught, equipped, commissioned, and sent forth to preach his precious gospel may still go on holding forth the word of life, that they may rejoice in the day of Christ, that they have not run in vain, nor yet laboured in vain. (Phil. ii. 16.) May none of us be weary in well doing, whether we labour with tongue or pen; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. And may I not add, as a fellow-labourer and a fellow-helper? "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. xv. 58.)

I AM fast going home, but I find the blood of Jesus my all-sufficient sufficiency.—*Madame Teed.*

A GENTLEWOMAN of this nation, having spent the whole afternoon and a great part of the evening at cards, in mirth and jollity, came home late at night, and finding her waiting gentlewoman reading, she looked over her shoulder upon the book, and said, "Poor melancholy soul, why dost thou sit here poring so long upon thy book?" That night she could not sleep, but lay sighing and weeping. Her servant asked her once and again what ailed her? At last she burst into tears, and said, "O! It was one word that I cast my eye upon in thy book that troubles me. There I saw that word 'Eternity.' How happy were I if I were provided for eternity."—*Flavel.*

Obituary.

LADY LUCY SMITH.

WE believe the first means used by the Spirit of the Lord for carrying home a word with power to the heart of Lady Lucy Smith was through the instrumentality of a laundry-maid. She was at the time a child, in her father's house, at Balgonie Castle, and used to go into the laundry on a Saturday afternoon to iron her doll's clothes. Some word this laundry-maid spoke was sent as an arrow of conviction to her soul. She longed for the opportunity to go again, and quite reckoned upon the Saturdays coming round, that she might hear more from the lips of the servant.

She was at this time very ignorant of God's word, but now became anxious to read it, and made up her mind she would read it all through, to see if she could find how she might be saved. She therefore secreted her Bible, always carrying it about with her, and at every opportunity took it out and read it. She was much alarmed when, at the beginning, she read of the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden, and of the cherubim being placed to guard the tree of life. She wondered how she could find her way back to the tree. Her Bible was in two volumes. After reading steadily through the first volume she read through the second, till she came to John xiv. 6: "I am the Way," &c.; and she there found Jesus to be the Way.

After this time she was taken much into the world, though mixing with such society was most distasteful to her. Often before starting to a ball or a dinner party, she would ask the Lord to give her some passage of the word to speak to those with whom she came in contact. It was a most remarkable feature through Lady Lucy's life, the power with which she was enabled to wield the Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; but, at the same time, she felt strongly the need of the Holy Ghost accompanying that word and applying it with power and unction to make it effectual.

Although she rarely spoke of her own experience, yet the tender, sympathising way in which she could enter into the doubts and difficulties of others, and her love for searching, powerful, experimental preaching plainly proved she was no stranger to the conflicts and warfare of the Christian life. At one time she greatly dreaded death; but during a severe attack of typhus fever, from which she suffered 13 years ago, this was entirely removed. At that time she dwelt very much upon the Lord having taught her in a peculiar way the meaning of Jer. xviii. 1-10, and caused her to rejoice in the fact that she was as clay in the hands of the potter.

During the same illness, when only partly conscious and unable to think of anything, the question came to her mind, "Where am I?" and the answer seemed to be, "Found in Him." Then shortly afterwards another question: "Where are my sins?" Then the answer: "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah,

and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve;" (Jer. l. 20;) and, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) She felt very strongly at that time that the Lord was her wise Counsellor, just giving her a portion of his word as she could bear it.

On Friday, December 8th, 1865, Mr. Smith and Lady Lucy returned from a journey to London, Hastings, and Leamington, which occupied about a month, and as their habit was, at that time of year, settled themselves at the house connected with the Bank, South Parade, Nottingham. The next day Lady Lucy went to Wilford House, and spent two hours with her family. During her visit she read 2 Chron. xii., specially remarking verses 1, 5, and concluding by prayer.

On Sunday, December 10th, she attended service in the room in Thurland Street, in the morning, but did not go out again that day. On Monday she was at Wilford by 10.30, took a drive with Mrs. H. A. S., and mentioned that Mr. Smith had spoken with much pleasure on the previous evening of Phil. i. 23: "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better," and remarked that she had said to him she hoped it was not for himself, or for his birthday portion he had received that text, and that he must remember verse 24. During the morning she occupied herself by collecting from the servants a few cast-off things, to take to a poor girl she had observed in a tattered condition as she passed through the tollbar, taking them to her as she returned to Nottingham. After this she was present at the Mother's meeting, when Mr. Wardley addressed them very solemnly on Luke xiii. 11-23.

Tuesday, 12th, was Mr. Smith's birthday. The morning was spent in distributing a few presents to the Lord's poor and needy people; and in the evening, Mr. Smith and Lady L. had a quiet time together for prayer, when Mr. S. was led to ask that they might be prepared for all that was preparing for them. He observed after this petition that she pressed his hand very warmly.

On Wednesday, 13th, Lady L. appeared as well as usual, and was particularly bright and much occupied. In the afternoon she drove to the House of Refuge, and was engaged in showing a lady who accompanied her all over the house. She then met the inmates in a heated room, when Mr. Wardley addressed them. She then returned to the bank in the carriage, and complained of much fatigue and chilliness. Almost immediately after tea she retired for the night, and her maid remarked that she made unusual haste to bed, and when she had lain down, Lady L. observed, "How good it is to have a bed to rest upon! What a mercy!

"Happy those who have done with care and woe,
And with their Saviour rest!"

Her maid answered,

"No more shall know a Father's frowd,
But ever with him reign,
And wear an everlasting crown;
For me to die is gain."

Lady L. then repeated this verse:

“Once they were mourning here below,
And wet their couch with tears;
They wrestled hard, as we do now,
With sins, and doubts, and fears.”

The following morning, when the housemaid went to her room, to take a cup of tea, she found Lady L. very weak, and she complained of a good deal of pain in her head. Immediately after taking the tea, she went to sleep, and slept till 11 o'clock, when she again roused. Her maid was then sitting by her, and found that she was not quite herself. The doctor was sent for. He seemed to think it was a bad cold, accompanied by much fever. Great drowsiness and unconsciousness continued through the day, so much so that when a text was repeated to her by her daughter-in-law, she took little or no notice of it.

On Friday, 15th, she continued much the same, still very drowsy, and often rambling; but she knew those around her better than she had done the day before.

On Saturday, 16th, she said, “The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?” “I was brought low and he helped me.” Throughout the day, at intervals, she was more herself than at any other time during her illness, and, with her usual consideration for others, remembered some promises she had made. She gave particular directions to Mrs. H. A. S., that two copies of Ruth Bryan's Letters should be sent by post to different friends; also £5 to a farmer, a godly man, who had suffered much from the Cattle Plague, and £5 to a poor but very gracious man in the South of England, who was to have 3s. a week from this fund. During the day she mentioned having visited H. P. in the almshouses on the Tuesday, and said, “She spoke with such beaming eyes of the peace which passeth all understanding.” Later in the day she spoke of the Lord's mercies, and said, “They are new every morning. Great is his faithfulness.”

Early on the Sunday morning she said,

“Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to thy cross I cling;”

and two or three times repeated the words, “He *hath* delivered, he *doth* deliver, and we trust he *will yet* deliver. At another time during the same day, she said, “All thy children shall be taught of the Lord,” laying great stress on the word “*taught*.” Again: “The word of the Lord is nigh thee; even in thy mouth and in thy heart.” She added, “It is *the Spirit* in the word.”

On Sunday evening, about nine o'clock, after the doctor's visit, she said to her daughter, “Some trust in chariots, some in horses, some in doctors, some in ministers; but we will trust in the Lord.”

On Monday, 18th, she was overheard to say, “The Lord is gracious and merciful; his loving-kindness is great.” After an interval, she said, “One taken and another left, and not for any good thing in *them*. Why *should* this be?” In the evening, to one who was standing by, she said, “The Lord does watch over us. He keeps us night and day, lest any should hurt us.”

On Tuesday, 19th, in the early morning, she said to her maid, "If any should ask about me at the cottage or the house, you may say, 'Should the Lord say to me, Lacked ye anything?' I can truly say, '*Nothing, Lord, nothing!*'"

Early on Wednesday morning, 20th, on seeing the sun shine into her room, she said to Mr. Smith, "The Sun of righteousness!" He replied, "Shall arise with healing in his wings." In the evening she said, "The Lord is the same, yesterday, to day, and for ever."

On Thursday, 21st, she spoke of Ps. xl. 1, 2, 3. "I waited patiently. How sweet!" At another time she said, "'The Lord's portion is his people!' How wonderful!"

On this day another doctor was called in, which was rather distressing to her. After the two doctors had consulted, she asked why they had been so long talking about her; and her son replied, "They are thinking of what they can do to relieve you." She said, "The Lord knows better than they all about me." It was said, "We must look to the great Physician." She replied, "Yes, we *say* we should; but seldom *do* it."

To Mr. Smith, at one time, she said, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning on her Beloved?" At times, under a sense of the Lord's gracious revealings, she would exclaim in rapture, "Wonderful! wonderful!"

"Who trusts in God's unchanging love
Builds on a Rock that cannot move.

My heart is fixed! O God; my heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord! Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he shall sustain thee! He will not suffer the righteous to be moved. It is so nice to feel that 'leaning on the Beloved.'

On Friday morning, 22nd, she seemed a little better, and had rallied almost beyond the expectation of the doctors, when they were with her at 11 o'clock the preceding evening; but soon after this she sank into a drowsy, unconscious state, and continued so the greater part of the day. It then became difficult to persuade her to take nourishment, and care was required in giving it. About two o'clock, when the doctor returned, he thought her sinking. Towards evening she again rallied, and became more conscious than she had been during the day.

In the night she said to her son, "Ask for more grace! Still his love is best and right." She also spoke to him of the dear children; but it was difficult to understand all that she said. At one time she said, "To depart and be with Christ, which is far better. You see I have nothing to do, but to go. Praise him for his mercies." It was said to her in the night, "Do you feel Jesus precious?" She said, "Indeed I do! I shall soon be going to him.

"Not the righteous, not the righteous;
Sinners, Jesus came to call."

Her maid said, "In my Father's house are many mansions." She replied, "How nice! How nice! Yes, yes, 'I will come again and receive you unto myself.'"

At another time, when taking an affectionate leave of her maid, she said, "Good-bye, good-bye. Farewell! I am going to Jesus." Again

she said, "The Lamb!" "Singing!" "Beautiful place!" "Like the disciple John!" Her son, who was beside her dying bed during her last few hours, heard her articulate something indistinctly, which sounded like, "Hallelujah!" And soon after 10 o'clock on Saturday morning, December 23rd, she sweetly fell asleep in Jesus. The memory of the just is blessed.

Lady Lucy suffered from disease of the heart, accompanied by congestion of the lungs and brain. The latter caused the constant ramblings of the mind. Through mercy there was little pain, but distress caused by breathlessness.

I have but little to add to the above account of the last days upon earth of Lady Lucy Smith, which, however, from her being so widely known and so universally respected, will, I believe, not only be read with general interest by all before whose eyes it may come, but will commend itself to the consciences of those who personally knew her ladyship both as a truthful statement, and, from its unassuming simplicity, as being fully in harmony with her own simple character.

Yet I should consider myself to be sadly deficient in paying that tribute of respect which I feel is due to her memory, if I did not embrace this opportunity of publicly expressing my high esteem and affection for her, arising, not only from a sense of her personal kindness which was great and unvaried, but from my general knowledge and observation of her character and conduct during some few years' acquaintance. I shall, therefore, embrace this occasion to present a slight sketch of her ladyship, which may serve for those who knew her only by name and report as a faint description of her, and for those who were favoured with her acquaintance as a little memento of one by them so justly esteemed and loved. In this attempt, however, at a description of her, I do not profess to present an elaborate portrait, which would require a fuller knowledge and an abler pen than I possess, but simply to jot down a few prominent features of her character as it opened itself to my observation at the various times when I had the pleasure and privilege of being entertained by her and her bereaved partner; though I am well convinced that none could thoroughly know and fully appreciate her but those who were continual eye-witnesses of her daily life and conversation. And as we all feel a solemn pleasure in recalling to mind not only the mental but the bodily features of those whom we loved in life, and over whom the grave has now closed, I shall devote a few lines to a description of her personal appearance, as being not only so striking in itself, but so thoroughly corresponding with her inner mind and disposition.

None who have once seen can ever forget that simple yet dignified and lady-like manner and deportment which at once commanded respect from the highest, and yet did not abash the lowest. I have seen her conversing at one time with persons of rank and education, and at another with poor labourers and almshouse-women; and yet I never traced any difference in her manner, except that, if possible, more kindness and attention were shown to the latter than to the former; thus practically exemplifying the apostle's words: "And those members of the body which we think less honourable, upon them we bestow more abundant honour." Unruffled calmness, and singular amiability and benevolence of aspect were the most marked features of her countenance, with a most pleasing openness of expression, which inspired love and respect, and yet disarmed undue fear. And yet there beamed from her eyes considerable intelligence, especially when she was speaking of the things of God, or relating the experience of some poor man or woman with whom she had met in some of her searches after the Lord's family. Her fea-

tures were small but very regular; and though her face was pale, yet it was not the pallor of ill health, but the result of a fair and delicate complexion, and of that clear, transparent marble hue which in this country we see so distinguishing a mark of the high born. Tall in stature and remarkably upright, she moved with that quiet grace and dignity which well became her station, and yet was all the more striking and charming from the absence of any assumption. Her apparel was striking from its remarkable simplicity and yet exquisite neatness, admirably becoming her from its thorough harmony with her character, and yet, in these days, from its plainness arresting the eye, as in such marked contrast with the gay and gaudy attire of many of the daughters of our professing Israel. But her countenance was but the index of her heart. Cecil, in his "Memoirs of John Newton," applies to John Thornton, her ladyship's maternal grandfather, and one of the merchant princes of London, what is said of Solomon, that "the Lord gave him largeness of heart, even as the sand on the sea shore;" and adds that "his extraordinary bounty was not the result of occasional impulse, like a summer shower, but like a river, copious and inexhaustible." Much of the same largeness of heart was bestowed upon Lady Lucy, and her benevolence, like his, was a perpetual stream, not a passing shower. A noble liberality, as free from ostentation as from parsimony; a generous hospitality, and yet neither profuse nor unbecoming the simple moderation prescribed by the gospel; a most thoughtful and considerate kindness, and yet bounded by prudence and directed by judgment, were marked features of her daily character.* She possessed also, in a degree I think never witnessed in any other woman, a most remarkable talent for orderly administration. Her household, which, when I visited them at Wilford House, was a large one, was a pattern of quiet yet firm and regular government. Without the least confusion of mind, or hastiness of words or manner, she would issue her directions to her attendants in the same distinct yet calm and sweet voice in which she would converse with her guests; and as she was herself a very model of punctuality and order, they were almost certain to be obeyed. She had a most active, and, I should say, orderly mind, in which there was a place for everything and everything in its place; and there was a something in her manner which commanded respect, and yet did not chain the tongue, or bring bondage on the spirit. The first time that I saw her was, I think, in October, 1849, when she and Mr. Smith came to hear me at Stamford, and the next morning she paid me a visit at my own house. Now I can truly say that she had not been five minutes in the room before I found myself, who am naturally very shy and reserved, talking more freely and plainly to her on the things of God than with some whom I have known for years; for though she ever preserved the place and position which

* Her ladyship's mother seems to have possessed much of the same benevolent disposition. John Berridge, writing to Mr. Thornton, thus speaks of her marriage to Lord Balgonie, the eldest son of the Earl of Leven and Melville:

"Dear and honoured Sir,—Mr. Astell has just paid us a transient visit, and acquaints me that you are returned from your episcopal visitation of the sea-ports, and that Lady B. is gone to Scotland. It proved a sad rainy day, I hear, when she set out, not a single dry eye in the family, nor in several of the neighbours. A comely farewell indeed, discovering the love and esteem she had won. Her marriage is somewhat like Rebecca's; only the groom, and not the steward, comes to fetch her from her native soil. May she find an Isaac, a kind and faithful partner in her Lord B. I suppose you felt a pang at parting, and did not know how much you loved until you took your leave; and though a bustle of business oft diverts your thoughts, your heart will miss your daughter long."

was her due, yet there was that charming ease in her manner, and such kindness and benevolence of word and aspect that all whom I have seen in her company, and myself amongst them, paid her respect without servility, and felt at their ease without feeling out of their place. She enjoyed, I believe, for the most part, excellent health—that indispensable instrument and handmaid of mental activity; and though at her decease past the allotted term of human life, yet no one could have judged her advanced age from her appearance. Not a wrinkle had creased her face, nor had her eyes lost their brightness or her ears their acuteness; age had not curved her form nor stolen much from the lightness and activity of her step; nor did her mental faculties seem impaired or their energy lessened. She seemed, when I last saw her at Gower Street Chapel, in the summer of last year, to have just sufficient age to make her venerable and yet not so much as to render her feeble. Her labours of love were indeed unwearied to the last, and hundreds of her actions will never be known till the great day. She never named them herself, but they would sometimes come out incidentally. I was standing, for instance, one morning, conversing with her at the hall door of Wilford House, and she said in her simple way, when I expressed a fear lest she should take cold, “I have stood here sometimes two hours in a morning attending to poor people who have come over from Nottingham.” She said no more; but I have no doubt that there was scarcely one of this crowd of applicants before that hall door to whom she had not listened, and in some way ministered relief. “The soul of religion,” says Bunyan, “is the practic part,” and that in which lies the main cross and the chief difficulty. To give her time, her attention, her ear to these applicants struck my mind as a much more forcible display of her benevolent mind than if she had told me how many rolls of flannel, yards of calico, loaves of bread, or even pieces of money that she had bestowed on them. Her delight was to find out the Lord’s poor and needy people; and when visiting, her pleasure would be in attending some chapel or room where the gospel was preached, and hunting up some hidden jewel in the shape of an old sailor, a poor widow, or an almshouse woman to whom she had got some clue. How I have seen her face almost shine when she has told me of some old woman as poor as Job, and yet rich in faith, whom she had found out; and though she never named her kindness, yet I have known from other sources of the flannel, blankets, clothes, and other things sent to the poor old creature, which showed it was not with her, “Be ye warmed and filled,” but something to warm and cheer the body, as well as to talk about the soul.

At her table there was no tittle tattle, no news, no slander, no worldly conversation, no levity or frivolity, such as I have painfully witnessed in some professing families, but nothing was said beyond the duties of hospitality, which she dispensed with a peculiar ease and charming freeness, that had not a reference to some Christian subject. As she knew my health was delicate and chest weak, she never pressed upon me those labours in preaching, visiting, &c., which she urged on other ministers; but I have been present sometimes at those gatherings of the Lord’s people at Wilford, or the Bank House, Nottingham, where her delight was to bring together those whom she believed to fear the Lord, and hospitably entertain them; and I must say that nothing could be conducted in a more Christian spirit and more to general edification. I believe she loved grace above everything else wherever she saw it; for what else could have drawn her to separate herself from all of her own rank and position, and associate with the poor despised family of God? Thus she would go to the little room at

Nottingham, and sit among the poor people to hear ministers who could have had no other recommendation to her than their grace and the power which attended their word. And is there one of them who would say that her kindness and attention to them out of the pulpit was less than her attentiveness to them in it?

She was not, I believe, accustomed to speak much of her own experience of the things of God; but I am sure she valued an experimental ministry; and a more attentive hearer one rarely sees in a congregation. Indeed, what but grace could have kept her so many years—more than half a century—loving and pursuing the truth, separating herself from the world, and from that high-born circle of which she would have been the ornament, to live to the glory of God and the good of his people, and to choose for her companions, not those of her own rank and station, but those who could have had no recommendation in her eyes but the image of Christ seen in them? I do not know what else but a love of the truth could have kept her year after year exerting herself as she did to procure it preached at Nottingham and Wilford. Now that she is gone, her value will be felt and known more than ever it was in her life. When the clock is keeping good time, few think about the weight and the pendulum; when the brook is fresh and flowing, few think of the source that feeds it. It is when the clock stops and cannot be got to go; it is when the brook dries up, or the well is exhausted, that the want of a time-keeper in the house, and of water for every domestic purpose is felt. We, at least we that are old, shall never see a second Lady Lucy. Humanly speaking, her loss to her bereaved partner, to her family, to a wide circle of friends and dependents, to the little cause at Nottingham, is irreparable. God, we know, can supply all their need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. May he be pleased graciously to do so and to make it manifest that even this bereavement is among the all things which work together for those who love God and are the called according to his purpose.

I have spoken, it will be thought, highly of her ladyship. I have done so, but they have not been words of flattery but of soberness and truth. Her noble mind would in life have shrunk from the voice of the flatterer, and in death she is beyond the reach both of it and detraction. I shall always, whilst life lasts, think of her with esteem and affection, and am glad now to be able to rear this little

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF DEPARTED WORTH.

J. C. PHILPOT.

P.S.—About three weeks before her death, she thus wrote in a letter to the matron of the Refuge, Nottingham, this expressive sentence:

“We are called upon to awake, and being awake to watch, and whilst watching to pray, and whilst praying to work; and praise is to sweeten, sanctify, and terminate all.”

As many Christian friends will, no doubt, be anxious and desirous to know how her bereaved partner is supported under his heavy affliction, we have much pleasure in being allowed to publish the following private communication:

“My dear Sir,—The heartfelt sympathy you have manifested towards me, in the kind note I have just received, as well as in your previous notes to Mr. John Adams and Mrs. Henry Abel Smith, has been truly soothing to my feelings in the heavy loss I have sustained, and which I am feeling daily and hourly, of the sharer of my joys and sorrows.

“In contemplating her life and Christian character, I am led to adore the predestinating and distinguishing grace of God, in calling her in early youth, and constraining her to embrace Moses’s choice, rather to

suffer affliction with the people of God, and to be a witness of God's truth in its power and unction, experience, and practice. Often, too, do I dwell, with adoring gratitude, upon the consummation of all her hopes and desires, in being for ever in the presence of the Lamb, in seeing him as he is, and in being like him.

“To myself, I feel this to be a very weaning and quickening dispensation, and intense are my longings to receive the summons, ‘The Master is come, and calleth for thee.’

“Allow me to say with what deep interest I read your bold and faithful defence of the truth upon the Rahab sermon.

“I remain, my dear Sir,

“Yours, with the greatest Christian regard and affection,
Wilford, Feb. 8th, 1866. “HENRY SMITH.”

PROVIDENCE ARRANGED.

“Who worketh all things.”—Eph. i. 2.

THY ways, O Lord, with wise design,
Are framed upon thy throne above;
And every dark and bending line
Meets in the centre of thy love.

With feeble light and half obscure,
Poor mortals thy arrangements view,
Not knowing that the least are sure,
And the mysterious just and true.

Thy flock, thy own peculiar care,
Though now they seem to roam uneyed,
Are led or driven only where
They best and safest may abide.

They neither know nor trace the way,
But, trusting to thy piercing eye,
None of their feet to ruin stray,
Nor shall the weakest fail and die.

My favour'd soul would meekly learn
To lay her reason at thy throne;
Too weak thy secrets to discern,
I'll trust thee for my Guide alone.

“AND how is my dear child prospering? Are you looking out of self, where no good dwells, or looking unto Jesus, who is all fair, and in whose righteousness we are all fair too? Are you an unrighteous sinner, living by faith upon the perfect righteousness of the God-Man Christ Jesus? This is very hard, born as we are under a covenant of works, but we are born again under a covenant of grace; and as an old woman said to one who was preaching the law to her, ‘O, Sir, I have been taught that my law-giver is my law-fulfiller.’ The effect of this righteousness is peace, quietness, and assurance. And holy living, too, will follow; for if our garments have been made white at such a cost, there will be a holy fear of spotting them. Keep near to Jesus, my beloved child,—near in prayer, near in reading his word, near in hearing; and ‘they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.’ May God the Holy Ghost show you the fulness of Jesus. We must know our need to draw out of that fulness grace for grace.—*Toplady.*”

APRIL 2, 1866.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

APRIL, 1866.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. I. 9; ROM. XI. 7; ACTS VIII. 37, 38; MATT. XXVIII. 19.

NOTES OF A SERMON PREACHED
BY MR. PHILPOT, AT CROYDON, LORD'S DAY MORNING,
APRIL 16, 1865.*

"Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord; his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth."—HOSEA vi. 3.

I WAS speaking, in my exposition of Hosea v. this morning, of the various keys of a house, and that these were all different. Thus there is the key of the street-door, of the parlour, of the study, of the bedrooms, of the kitchen, of the pantry; and there is no use taking the street-door key to open the door of the study, or of the parlour-door key to open the tea-caddy. You may fumble at the lock with the wrong key and hamper it, but you will never open it unless you have the right key. How many bring their keys to open God's word, but miserably fail because their wrong keys will not fit into or turn the lock. But there is a master-key which will open those inner chambers which are filled with all precious and pleasant riches; (Prov. xxiv. 4;) and that is the key of experience. We might, for instance, understand the literal meaning of the book of Hosea, have a critical knowledge of the language in which the Holy Ghost originally composed it, explain the ancient or Oriental customs referred to in it; but that would be taking the street-door key to open the cash-box. What we want is the key to understand the spiritual meaning, which, after all, is the only one to do our souls any real good. Now we only understand the spiritual meaning of God's word by having some experience of that word in our own hearts; for then we have an unction from the Holy One, whereby we know all things, and can penetrate beyond the letter of the word into its inner core and spirit. Indeed I may say that only so far as we are blessed with some experience of the truth and know divine things by divine teaching, can we enter into any of the heavenly mysteries of God's word, and find it to be spirit and life to our souls.

* The above sermon was taken down by a young man in the congregation; and though somewhat imperfect and fragmentary, as might be expected from one who is not a practised reporter, and therefore requiring some revision, is, on the whole, a faithful report.—J. C. P.

Let us then take up the subject where I dropped it this morning,* viz., the end of the preceding chapter. The Lord had there said, "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early." (Hosea v. 15.) But this chapter opens with Ephraim's words: "Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up." (Hosea vi. 1.) "Come and let us return unto the Lord." We have basely departed from him, but now let us return. "For he hath torn." Now Ephraim sees where the moth came from, and who was the lion; who had torn, and there was none to rescue. "For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah. I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none shall rescue him." (Hosea v. 14.) The soul sees that its wounding strokes came from the Lord. "He hath torn, and he will heal us." Here is faith springing up into living exercise in the power of God. "He hath smitten;" it was from his hand the blows came; it was he that rent and tore us; and he, and he only, can and will bind us up. From the same hand must come both wound and cure. Ephraim has now got on the right track. There is no more being "broken in judgment, because he willingly walked after the commandment;" no more going to the Assyrian, or sending to king Jareb; no hiding sin in his bosom, or rolling it as a sweet morsel under the tongue; but some dawning beams of opening day breaking in upon his soul show him the path in which he must walk to find pardon and peace; for he seems to have had a view by faith of the resurrection of Christ. "After two days he will revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." Something like this was felt in some of our souls when the Lord first appeared to us as a suitable Saviour. We felt that we had departed from God; that this was the cause of his hiding his face, and that he would not be found of us till we acknowledged our offences. But when in our affliction we sought him early, there was some view of a risen Christ at the right hand of the Father as the Mediator between God and men. This was the opening of a door of hope. When Christ rose from the dead, the church mystically rose with him. We are said, therefore, to be risen with Christ; (Col. iii. 1;) to be quickened together with him, raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places. (Eph. ii. 5, 6.) Ephraim therefore says: "After two days will he revive us, in the third day will he raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." Then come the words of the text: "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord. His going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth."

In opening up these words I shall, with God's help, direct your attention to these three leading points:

I. First, the *condition*. I use the expression reluctantly, but I can find no better. "If we follow on to know the Lord."

* The exposition was from Hosea v. 11-15, and its leading points were to show Ephraim's sin, chastisement, and repentance.

II. Secondly, the *promise*. "Then shall we know."

III. Thirdly, the *mode of fulfilment*. "His going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and the former rain unto the earth."

I. I use the word condition, I have already said, with reluctance; but bear in mind, that though I use the word, I do so in a gospel sense. It is true that there are no conditions in the gospel; and yet there are "ifs," which, though not conditional, because the Lord enables us to perform them, are so connected with the promise to which they are attached that they cannot be separated from it. So stands the "if" of our text. "Then shall we know, *if* we follow on." If no following on, no knowing. And yet the Lord must give both will and power to follow on as much as to know.

But now let us consider the spiritual meaning of the words thus conditionally expressed, introduced, and guarded by the "if." "If we follow on to know the Lord." Before the soul can even begin to follow on, it must first be put into the right path; and before it can keep on pursuing its course boldly and perseveringly, it must be well assured that it is the right road. If I were to ask my way to Mitcham, and a person on whom I could depend were to say to me, "All right, Sir; keep on this road; if you follow it, it will bring you there," it implies that I am in the right road, or he would tell me that I was wrong altogether. So when the text says, "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord," it shows that we are already in the gospel path. When the Holy Ghost turns us from Mount Sinai, that fiery mount, and plants our feet in the road to Zion, every step is a step forward to heaven, and every step is a good step; for the way is good, the direction good, and the end good. And we have companions in it, according to that word: "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Isa. ii. 3.) But we follow on for what? To know the Lord. The Lord said in his intercessory prayer, "This is life eternal, that they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (John xvii. 3.) Thus the eternal life which the Lord bestows on as many as the Father has given him consists in these two things: 1. To know the only true God; and, 2. To know Jesus Christ whom he has sent. There is then no eternal life in a man's bosom, no eternal life reserved for him in the time to come, except he is taught and brought to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ the Son of God. This knowledge is no natural knowledge, no fruit of learning or study, no acquisition of human industry, talent, wisdom, or investigation, but a knowledge arising out of spiritual manifestations to the soul. The Lord, therefore, said to Simon Peter, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. xvi. 17.) So Paul also speaks: "When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me." (Gal. i. 16.) I am satisfied, both from Scripture and my own experi-

ence, that there is no true knowledge of God except by some personal manifestation of himself to our soul, nor any saving knowledge of Jesus Christ except by some revelation of him to our hearts. I am at a point here, and so are all who have felt and groaned under the darkness, ignorance, and unbelief of their mind, and had any shining in of the true light of God from heaven. In the first leading of the blessed Spirit in the path Zionward, there is some discovery to the soul of the Father. If you look at the words of John in his first epistle, you will find he speaks to fathers, young men, and children: "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake." (1 John ii. 12-14.) The word rendered "little children" here is a different word in the original from that used, verse 14; it is a more general and comprehensive one, as in the last verse of the epistle, and includes all the family of God. But each of these three classes has its distinctive character. "I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning," that is, Christ, who was "in the beginning," (John i. 1,) and "from the beginning." (1 John i. 1.) This was the fathers' mark, that they knew the Lord Jesus for themselves. "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one." To fight, wrestle with, and overcome Satan, was the young men's mark. "I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father." Here the word means little children, as small in stature and young in age, and is the same word as the little child whom Jesus called unto him, and set in the midst of the disciples. (Matt. xviii. 2.) This then is the little child's mark, that he knows the Father. See the distinction; the little children know the Father, that is God, and the fathers know him from the beginning, that is Jesus Christ. Does not this correspond with what the Lord said to his disciples, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me?" But by knowing the Father here, we must not understand that the little children at first know him as a Father shedding abroad his love in their hearts, so much as they know him as a righteous God. The foundation of that godly fear which is the beginning of wisdom is some personal discovery of God to our souls. If we have not had that, we have not a right fear of God; for only as he reveals himself to our hearts is there a right knowledge of him. But you may say, "How can we see Him who is invisible, or know Him who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto?" How do you see the sun? By his beams. The sun itself is too bright to look upon. He is revealed by the beams which shine out of him. Is it not so in the early dawn, when the rays of the sun discover his presence? So we see God by a beam of himself.

Every step, then, in the way, is to make us know more of that great God whom we are thus taught to fear. There is a following on, if we know God in this way; for these beams have a guiding light, an attractive influence, and a quickening, enlivening power. But all this time we may have very dim views of God's dear Son; true views yet faint views, right views yet feeble views, seeing him

in the word more than in the light of his manifested presence; something breaking in, perhaps, of the true light with sweetness and savour, yet we can hardly tell what it is, or if there is salvation in it. This is what I may call an incipient knowledge of the Son of God. But after a time, it may be, perhaps, a long time, of doubt and fear, conviction and trouble, prayer and supplication, there is a blessed revelation of the Son of God to the soul. His glorious Deity, his sacred humanity, his complex Person, are set before the eyes of the mind as clearly as if we saw him with our bodily eyes. And what is the immediate effect? He is at once received into the heart, embraced in the affections, and enthroned in the conscience as Lord and King.

But even after this manifestation of Christ there is still a following on to know the Lord. The soul that has once known something of the Lord is never satisfied but by obtaining clearer, deeper, more spiritual and abiding views of his beauty and blessedness. After such a clear revelation of the Person and work of the Son of God as left no doubt on the mind that we saw him by the eye of faith, we may walk in such thick darkness and bewilderment of soul as to lose all sight, and to our feelings all knowledge of him, so as even to doubt whether there is a God. But O how intense sometimes are our desires that he will break through the cloud, and speak a word to our soul. I have stood sometimes under a tree, lifted up my eyes to the Lord, and cried unto him with such earnestness and vehemence to break in on my heart. How at such seasons, we long for him to rend the heavens and come down and manifest himself to our soul. How at times we seem not to have a shred of religion, not a grain or an atom. Then we have again such goings up of desire that the Lord would only speak one word, give one look, apply one soft touch. This is all we want. A word from the Lord, some breaking in of the light of his countenance, some manifestation of his presence, some knowledge of and communion with himself, some healing beams, bringing with them light, life, liberty, and love—this is all our religion. When we have not this, where is all our religion? Gone, fled, vanished. I have none. I don't say I am going into the world, or to give up all my profession and all my hope; but I have no religion; at least nothing that I call religion, unless the Lord is pleased to speak into my poor heart, and make himself known by his almighty power. We have the fear of God, it is true, still there, with faith and a good conscience, for these we must never put away; but as to any felt enjoyment of the things of God, we have no religion to satisfy the heart, or give rest and peace to the soul. Here, then, is the blessedness of the promise: "Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord." This promise has a very wide bearing—a keen, far-seeing eye, a strong, far-reaching hand. Perhaps you are only just beginning to follow on. You have desires, something more than wishes; for some may wish to be saved who have no strong desires after manifested mercy. You have prayers, you have sighs and cries, tears and groans, often begging of the Lord

to appear. You are in the track; you are following on to know the Lord; for that is what you want. You want to know God the Father in the sweet shedding abroad of his love in the soul, God the Son in a revelation of his Person and work, and God the Holy Ghost in his heavenly communion. You are following on, though it may sometimes be through a cloud of darkness, a crowd of fears, a host of devils, and a sea of troubles.

(*To be continued.*)

THE LOVELINESS OF CHRIST.

BY RICHARD SIBBES, PURITAN MINISTER.

“My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.”—CANT. v. 10.

LOVE is such a boundless affection, that when it once breaks forth in praises upon a good foundation, it knows no measure; as we see here in the church, which, being provoked, and as it were challenged by “the daughters of Jerusalem” to explain the excellency of him she had with so much affection incessantly sought after, that she might justify her choice, (ere she descend to particulars,) breaks forth into this general description of her beloved; whereby she cuts all off from all hopes of equalling him: “My beloved is white and ruddy,” (exceedingly fair,) nay, “the chiefest among ten thousand,” (none like him.) She would not have us think she had bestowed her love but on the most excellent of all, “the chiefest of ten thousand.” Well were it for us if we could do so in our love; that we might be able to justify our choice; not to spend it on sinful, vain, and unprofitable things, which cause repentance and mourning in the end; of this the church here worthily clears herself; she had chosen “the chiefest among ten thousand.”

And most justly did she place her affections upon so excellent an object, who was so full of “all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,” the life of our life, “in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;” in whom was a gracious mixture and compound of all heavenly graces; where greatness and goodness, justice and mercy, God and man, meet in one person. Such an one who breaks no bruised reed, nor quenches the smoking flax, (Matt. xii. 20,) who refuses not sinners, but invites them unto him, offering to heal all and cure all who come. He is a king indeed. (John xviii. 37.) But this also approves her choice; he rules all, commands all, judges all. What then can she want who has such a friend, such a husband; whose government is so winning, mild, and merciful?

He is not such a monarch as loves to get authority by sternness, like Rehoboam, (1 Kings xii. 13.) but by those amiable graces of gentleness and love. All the excellencies of holiness, purity, and righteousness, are sweetly tempered with love and meekness in him. You may see, for instance, how he takes his disciples’ part against the Pharisees, and the poor woman’s that came to wash his feet and kissed them, against the Pharisee who had invited him to dinner. (Luke vii. 44.) The church is a company of despised people, who

are scorned by pharisaical proud spirits; who perhaps have morality and strength of intellect, in which they glory. Now, Christ takes part with the broken spirits, against all proud spirits. Although he is gone to heaven, (where he is full of majesty,) yet he has not forgotten his meekness nor changed his nature, with change of honour. He is now more honoured than he was, for "he has a name above all names," in heaven or earth; (Acts iv. 12;) yet he is pitiful still. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (Acts ix. 4.) He still makes the church's case his own. Together with beams of glory, there are bowels of pity in him, the same that he had here upon earth; which makes him so lovely to the truly broken-hearted, believing soul: "My beloved is white and ruddy."

He is set out likewise by comparison with all others: "He is the chiefest of ten thousand;" a certain number for an uncertain, that is, the chiefest among all. In all things Christ has the pre-eminence. "He is the firstborn from the dead;" (Col. i. 15;) "He is the firstborn of every creature;" (Rom. viii. 29;) he is the elder brother; the chief among all. All kings, priests, and prophets, were but types and shadows of him. He the body, the truth, the substance. He is prophet, priest, and king, the great teacher of his church, who spake by all the former prophets, and speaks by his ministers to the end of the world. "The Angel of the Covenant," the Word, who expresses his Father's breast; that as he came from the bosom of his Father, so lays open his counsel to mankind. It was he that spake by Noah, and preached by his Spirit to the souls that are now in prison. (1 Pet. iii. 19.) So, "he is chief among all." But especially so in regard of his righteousness; for which Paul "accounted all dung and dross, to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, but the righteousness that is in Christ;" (Phil. iii. 9;) which is more than the righteousness of an angel, being the righteousness of God-man, and, above all, the righteousness of the law.

QUEST. But what is this to us or to the church? ANS. Yes; for his beauty and excellency is the church's, because he is the church's: "My beloved is white and ruddy, and my beloved is the chief among ten thousand." It is the peculiar interest the church has in Christ which refreshes her spirit; excellency with interest in him: "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine." The more excellent the husband is, the more excellent is the wife. She only shines in his beams. Therefore, it is the interest we have in Christ which endears Christ to us.

Is Christ thus excellent, super-excellent, thus transcendently excellent, "white and ruddy, the chief of ten thousand?" This is of service—1st. *To draw those that are not yet in Christ unto him.* 2nd. *To comfort those that are in Christ.*

1st. Those that are not yet in Christ, not contracted to him, to draw them, what can prevail more than that which is in Christ? Beauty and excellencies, greatness and goodness. Indeed one main end of our calling, the ministry, is, to lay open and unfold the unsearchable riches of Christ; to dig up the mine, thereby to draw the affections of those who belong to God to Christ.

2nd. But it is not enough to know that there are excellencies in Christ to draw us to him, but *there must be a sight of our misery, what beggars we are, and how indebted.* Before we are in Christ we are not our own. The devil lays claim to us that we are his; death lays claim to us. We are under sin; we cannot answer one of a thousand; therefore are compelled to close with him who can discharge all our debts, answer all our suits, and non-suit Satan in the court of heaven. When once we are married to the Lord of heaven and earth, all is ours. We have a large charter: "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God."

QUEST. Why are all things ours? ANS. *Because we are married to Christ, who is Lord of all.* It is the end of our calling to sue for a marriage between Christ and each soul. We are the friends of the bride to bring the church to him; and the friends of the church to bring Christ to them. It is the end of our ministry to bring the soul and Christ together; and let no debts, no sins hinder. For especially he invites such as are sensible of their sins. "Where sin abounds, grace abounds much more." (Rom. v. 20.) "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden." (Matt. xi. 28.) "And he came to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke xix. 10.) He requires no more but that we are sensible of our debts and miseries, which sense he works likewise by his Holy Spirit.

DESIRING SOUL-COMFORT.

WHEN wilt thou comfort me?—Ps. cxix. 82.

TROUBLES of every varied form,

On every hand I see;

No refuge from the gathering storm;—

"When wilt thou comfort me?"

My eyes with expectation fail,

Waiting the King to see;

And pierce the separating veil;—

"When wilt thou comfort me?"

Of earthly helpers have I none;

Valueless all they be,

My help must come from thee alone;—

"When wilt thou comfort me?"

Thou art my hope; all my desire,

Its centre has in thee;

O dost not thou my cry inspire?—

"When wilt thou comfort me?"

From day to day, from month to year,

I mourn that I should be

So full of sin, and doubt, and fear;—

"When wilt thou comfort me?"

Where'er thy word is, there is power;

Let that word spoken be,

And haste the long-desired hour,

"When thou wilt comfort me."

A ROUGH SEA ; BUT LAND IN SIGHT.

Dear Friend,—You no doubt think it is time to have a line from a friend you have so often sympathised with; and you would have had one before now, but fresh troubles have made me roar, struck me dumb, and put me to the look out, lest I get amongst the breakers, and the poor old leaky vessel go to pieces at last; but notwithstanding the storms increasing, God Jesus still keeps at the helm, and holds out some faint hopes that the desired haven of rest will still be obtained; and who can tell but all my increasing fears, doubts, haltings, and tremblings, the devil's deceitful doings, the treachery of false friends, and the worst of all treachery from a sin-spoiled nature and a heart too foul to be mentioned, may all turn out at last as so many puffs of wind to keep the vessel of mercy from getting too near the quicksands of lies, errors, and soul-damning delusions, in which the world's churches now so much abound, and about which so much time and talent are being employed in order to remove them? Old Satan has had such a long time to study how to dress up old heresies in a new coat that no doubt he will still prove more than a match for us all; but this is Zion's mercy, her God has pledged his word that all her children shall be taught of him as the truth is in Christ Jesus; and as God teaches by his Spirit there is none teaches like him; and every lesson that we are taught so endears Christ to us that he appears more and more lovely and precious and glorious than ever; so that our very souls within us testify from God-like power in the midst of daring foes, threatening dangers, and perfect weakness, that Jesus Christ is God over all and God-blessed for evermore. I believe in my very heart that the more devils vex, men oppose, sin moves and stirs, hypocrites mock, and things and circumstances confound our sense and reason, the firmer will the true faith of God's elect appear in holding fast by the Godhead and incomprehensible Sonship of Jesus our incarnate God, Rock, and Refuge, to save us out of all our distresses; and the Father smiling us into the love's embraces of his coequal Son gives such a demonstrative proof of Christ being in the Father and the Father in Christ as makes one's very soul to dance, and our hearts to sing to the praise of such rich grace, love, and mercy towards poor perishing sinners from Israel's Three-One God.

I have been much exercised about many things since last I saw you which I cannot put to paper; but, thanks to my all-wise, all-gracious, and all-loving God Jesus, here I am still not consumed, though the bush is all on fire. I am commanded to put off my shoes, for the place whereon I stand is holy ground, the obedience and blood of the Son of God. I must go barefooted, thoroughly empty, penniless, hungry, thirsty, sick, and sore, all the rest of my journey to Canaan. O that I had the wings of the loving dove, for then would I fly away from the stormy wind and tempest. But come, come! It is not so bad now as it might have been if I had been left still in Egypt and compelled to make bricks without straw, and been beaten black and blue because the number was not

made up before the nightfall of death. O yes, yes. The work is done, God-like done, most gloriously done, by the Child born of Mary, by the Son given by the Father; and being as ancient as his Father, he is called the everlasting Father, the mighty Counsellor, the Prince of Peace, the Almighty God of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, and all the elect of God; and upon his Almighty shoulders rests all the government of heaven, earth, sea, angels good and bad, the church, the world, men, things, and circumstances, even to the falling of a hair from our head, a sparrow to the ground, as well as the recognising of emperors, kings, princes, and nobles upon the earth; so that

“Not a single shaft can hit
Till the God of love sees fit.”

I hope you are being favoured with little bits and scraps of grace and mercy to still keep up the appetite for the great feasting time, when our praying and fasting time will be for ever and ever done away; I mean the time of the second coming of the Son of Man, when he will declare time to be no longer, when the eternity of his spouse's rich feast will commence never to have an end, and when the world's good things will all, like Dives, end in an eternal disappointment, in being not worth even so much water as a single drop from a finger to cool their parched tongue. Then will they vainly wish that their tongues had been cut out instead of their still being in, for their eternal gnawing as the only meat that is left them, for having so blasphemously used them against God's Christ, God's words, and God's servants and children.

May you and I, and all my kind-hearted friends at Croydon, be daily blessed with praying hearts and watchful souls, that we may be accounted of God worthy to escape all those dreadful things that are fast coming upon the earth to try them that dwell therein; and as strangers and pilgrims, may be clad with the widow's weeds of sorrowing and sighing for our daily follies, faults, sins, and increasing infirmities, and giving God no rest until he make his Zion an eternal excellency before himself, the God of the whole earth and of heaven.

Feb. 12th, 1861.

G. MOORE.

A LETTER BY THE LATE W. COWPER.

Dear Friend,—I received your very welcome lines the day after you wrote them, and return you my most sincere thanks for them. I desire to unite with you in thankfulness to the God of our mercies for help afforded in the time of need to Mrs. A., and for that measure of health yourself and Mrs. B. are favoured with; and likewise to mourn with you on behalf of the afflictions of your late minister, although a stranger to me; for it is distressing, in these days of degeneracy, to see a good man laid aside from usefulness; but our God is too wise to be mistaken, however blind unbelief may err; and many of his dispensations call upon us to “wait the great

teacher, Death, and God adore;" for he hath said, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

You say, my dear friend, you hope I am not going to turn coward; but how you can raise your hopes upon such a baseless fabric I cannot tell; for you know I never was anything else. You know very well when I was amongst you it was in weakness, and in *fear*, and in much *trembling*; and even in the first instance I cannot say that I enlisted as "free, able, and willing," as good soldiers generally do; neither was I a volunteer; but, like brother Simon, *compelled* to bear the cross; so that at the best you can only consider me a pressed man; and the old proverb is, "Two of such are not worth as much as one volunteer."

It does appear, good friend, that you have a tolerably good guess of me, by supposing that I belong to the awkward squad of the Ephraimites, who, it appears, had not hearts enough to keep the field; and although it is written to their disgrace, I have been rather an imitator than a hater of their cowardice. O how many times have my thousand vows and resolutions fled at the voice of one! O how many times hath my cowardly heart contradicted every word my gracious Captain hath spoken. He hath often told me I shall never perish, but my heart hath replied, "I shall one day perish." He hath said he will give me the kingdom, and I have run away to my tent, and said, "I have no part in David." He hath said he will guide me with his counsel, and afterward receive me to glory, that he will never leave me nor forsake me; but I have said, "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me." Indeed, the ragged regimentals of my profession are in such trim that I more resemble a powder monkey than a front-rank man; and as for my upper garment, (or what I should call surplice, had I the honour to belong to the Oxford Blues,) the starch is so completely taken out of it that I am quite ashamed to appear on parade; and though my Captain has said I shall be clothed with change of raiment, and that the shame of my nakedness shall not appear, yet as you know that having a few bits of new cloth by me, I have often sat down and patched up my old filthy rags. Although he hath told me I shall not cover myself with my works, I have told him that I would not let my righteousness go until the day of my death. Still he hath borne with my insults; and having from eternity set his heart upon my welfare, and declared that all things shall work together for my good, and fulfilled his promise, too, in thousands of instances for more than twenty years, and hath never, never suffered any weapon formed against me to prosper, nor temptation but what is common, but hath ever made a way for my escape; yet mistrust, timorousness, and doubt are still my companions, and hardly ever do they suggest a thought to me upon the subject of deserting but I fall in with it instantly, and, as the backslider in heart, get filled with my own ways. Sometimes my hypocritical heart tells him I love his word of command, delight to obey his orders, am content with my wages, with a thousand other flatteries, and at the same time my very heart is in league with his enemies. Indeed, Deborah,

if thou hadst known what a cowardly deserter thou hadst been writing to, I think thou wouldst never have called upon me for much bravery. Although mine infinitely wise Commander hath told me to stay my hand, remember the battle, and do no more, yet coward enough I am to think every little skirmish will finish me, and that I shall never see the light nor behold the Lord in the land of the living.

I do intend, if spared, to see you in September, as the day following the one on which I received yours Mr. M. came and served me with an appearance. I should not have delayed replying so long, but I have been on a recruiting party in Hertfordshire, where I think the love of the truth is very manifest in some, and departure from the truth quite as much so in others.

Mr. Fowler is gradually getting better, and engaged in both services on last Lord's Day. He is leaving town, and I hope the change of air will soon bring him round.

Hoping to see you shortly, and to commune face to face, I need add no more, but subscribe myself yours to serve in the great cause of our Immanuel with the powers of darkness, until he shall be pleased to receive my spirit, where the wicked cease from troubling, never more to be plagued with a cowardly heart.

May this be your happy lot and mine; and may the Lord favour us very often with a look within the veil.

I should be glad, if you feel at liberty, with as much as a sheet will hold in reply.

Yours affectionately in covenant Bonds,
London, July 17th, 1834. W. COWPER.

A LETTER FROM A SOLDIER.

My dear Brother in the Smitten Rock,—May grace and truth be multiplied unto you, from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

I have no doubt you will be somewhat surprised to receive this letter from one that you have no knowledge of in the flesh; but I hope that we are united by a stronger tie than flesh and blood. I hope we are united by one Spirit through Jesus Christ: "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." (1 John iv. 2.) My dear brother, this is beyond the knowledge of the natural man. None can know this but those poor sinners who are brought to see their lost state before a just and holy God; and when they are brought to see this, then they cry out, "Lost! Lost!" But so it must be.

When the poor child of God first feels legal convictions of sin, he flies to some carnal means to drive his fears from him; but when he finds that he cannot, he begins to pin a few fig-leaves together. Poor sinner! He little thinks that God can see through his deceitful heart. He finds that he is getting worse and worse. What can

he do to be saved? He knows not that the spiritual Joshua is so near; when he comes he finds all his fig-leaves taken from him. Then what can he do? But he who has begun the good work will never leave it nor forsake it. Yet, what we hear now-a-days is, we must do a little ourselves. I should like to know what they would do with a poor sinner like me, one that was trying to run headlong into hell. What could I do to save my poor soul? Nothing, nothing; and I hope that I never shall see anything of my own in myself but what deserves God's wrath. To him be all the honour and praise, for he has gotten himself the victory.

O may our blessed Lord and Saviour pour out the balm of Gilead into the poor souls of his church. He is worthy of our hearts' best gifts, he who has redeemed us from sin and death. O may he give us more of himself to praise him with. This is only acceptable when his Holy and blessed Spirit shows us our need of him.

When in the midst of a barrack, brim full of unbelievers who take a delight in cursing his holy name, our own evil heart is sometimes with them; but when he comes in, then, depend on it, your poor soul will cry out.

My dear brother, I am the youngest in the little church at Kirkee, yet my blessed Lord and Master is able to keep me to the end. Since I was brought to see the goodness of the Lord and my fallen state by nature, I have been to Persia, and now our little church is scattered through India, some marching all over the country, and one is sick in hospital. So you may see how our regiment is scattered over India.

Dear brother, I have sent you one of our hymn-books. I know you will like it; I can see that by the sermons that you send out. O my dear brother, how I should like to hear Mr. Tiptaft; but I must wait till my Master's time arrives, and till then I must say, "His will and not mine be done."

Your unworthy Brother,

Poonah, India.

S. KELLEY,
H. M.'s 14th Dragoons.

THE PATH OF LIFE.

Sir,—I can have no objection at any time to your dropping me a line on things of a better world, as I profess and believe myself to be one of the true church of Christ, which stands not in outward forms or ceremonies of any kind, but in an internal, experimental knowledge of God and Christ, as revealed in his word by the eternal Spirit: "For the kingdom of God stands not in word, but in power;" "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;" which knowledge, if it be real, will produce an upright, godly conversation in the world, justice and equity between man and man, frequent intercourses with God through Christ by prayer in the Spirit, a diligent searching after the word of God in the Bible and the pulpit, and a longing to see his name spread among sinners.

With respect to the two men at A., whom you censure for absenting themselves from every place of worship, I can say nothing, not knowing what kind of preaching there is at that place. It must appear evident to you, and to every one, that all who pretend to preach the gospel do not preach it; for if they did there must be as many gospels as there are sects and sentiments of religion in the world, all pretending theirs to be the true gospel to the exclusion of every other. I truly agree with you that it is a matter of the highest importance to every individual to know what the gospel of Christ is, and how it must be received if the soul is ever benefited by it; for, according to the apostle Paul, there is a twofold receiving of the gospel: "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost." According to this, there is a receiving in word only, as well as a receiving in power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost. The former it receives in the judgment, and understanding only; the latter in the heart and conscience. By the former is produced a feigned and presumptuous faith; "they for a while believe;" by the latter, a faith real and unfeigned. On these two hang all the professing world at large; real, genuine faith in one, and infidelity in the other. There is no alternative. Believer or unbeliever is the state of every man on the face of the earth; and how necessary is that exhortation of the apostle Paul: "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates!"

I agree with you that there are two extremes into which men fall, for the want of the right receiving of the word of God. The one supposes himself possessed of will and power, by which he can produce works of righteousness sufficient to recommend him to the favour of God, and so becomes zealously affected, but not well. (Gal. iv. 17.) He fasts, prays, resolves, vows, gives alms, attends the church, &c., and in what he thinks he fails or comes short, he calls in the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ to make up the deficiency; so, according to our Lord's words, he takes a piece of new cloth, the Saviour's obedience, and patches it to his old garment of legal righteousness, in hope of appeasing a guilty conscience; at the which he labours all the year round, without attaining to any real, experimental knowledge of the gospel of Christ; and these are Solomon's fools, whose labour wearieth every one of them, because they know not the way to the city. (Ecc. x. 15.) They are "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." All their service is nothing but dead works, produced by a legal, self-righteous spirit, the fear of death, and the dread of hell, from which their consciences must be cleansed by the blood of Christ, if ever their souls are saved. (Heb. ix. 14.)

The other extreme is the very reverse of this, yet equally dangerous. Instead of working, they work not at all, being conscious, more or less, as all natural men are, that they are sinners; and hearing of a free salvation by Jesus Christ exhibited in the gospel, they readily fall in with it, and receive it in their judgments, but not in their hearts or consciences. A superficial, presumptuous faith is

begotten; they jump into a supposed assurance of heaven: "An inheritance," says Solomon, "may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed." (Prov. xx. 21.) These in general are great talkers, boast much of the liberty of the gospel, whilst themselves are the servants of sin, the strong man armed never having been cast out of the heart, nor the conscience purged by the blood of Christ. These have a name to live while they are dead; and hundreds of these now occupy various pulpits in this United Kingdom, and are styled evangelical ministers. The apostle calls such, "instruments without life, giving sound." (1 Cor. xiv. 7.) They talk of life and salvation by Christ, while they themselves are dead, under the curse of a broken law, and exposed to eternal wrath, never having been truly divorced from a covenant of works, which all must be, according to Paul, before they can be truly married to Christ. (Rom. vii. 3, 4.)

Now, Sir, there is a way between both, in which every real believer does walk; which way is hidden from all that have not the Spirit of God. But "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." When God begins his good work of faith with power on a sinner's heart (2 Thess. i. 11) and to lead him in this way, he cannot see or make it out himself at first; for, as it was with our father Abraham, so it is with all his children. "He went out, not knowing whither he went;" and they are led by a way that they know not; (Isa. xlii. 16;) and until darkness is made light before them, and crooked things straight, they cannot understand the way of the Spirit; but when that is done, this way is cast up and made plain; (Isa. lxii. 10;) which way the Lord calls the way of regeneration, (Matt. xix. 28,) it being a renewal of every faculty of the soul by the Holy Ghost, and leading them all to centre in Christ crucified, the true way of life.

Now, a man may easily know if the word has come to him in word only, or in power. If in word only, it has been received without any anguish, trouble, or distress of conscience, which are the sure marks of the power of God; for when the word of God comes with power, it is like a two-edged sword, and takes the same effect on the soul and spirit of a man as a sword does literally when it is thrust into the body. If the wound be deep, the pain and smart will be very acute. So when God makes his word "sharper" in the conscience "than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart," it is sure to beget pain in the soul, with trouble and distress, more or less, as may be seen throughout the word of God. It was this that made David say, "Thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore." Job says, "The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison wherof drinketh up my spirit." Jeremiah says the word of God in him was a burning fire, shut up in his bones; and Paul found it sharper than any two-edged sword; so do all who are under its divine influence.

Before the law came in its spirituality to Paul, he was alive in his

own eyes, but dead in God's; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and he died. The truth is, he, like every other pharisee, supposed the law reached no further than the external letter, touching which he considered himself blameless; but when it came with power, he found it to reach the very thoughts and intents of the heart, and discovered to him the great depth of iniquity which lay hidden before. He found the law spiritual, himself carnal, sold under sin; for sin took occasion, by the commandment, to work in him all manner of concupiscence, and he found his heart in the same state our Lord describes it in Mark vii. 21, 22: "For from within, out of the heart of man, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness." Now, there are very few who believe their hearts to be thus bad; and the reason is, they never have been enlightened, or quickened by the Spirit of God. If they had, they would be compelled to believe it from what they saw and felt; like Peter's audience, who were pricked in their hearts, for the want of which they remain in unbelief.

The first real act of faith brings a man to believe he is in the same state God declares him to be—dead in trespasses and sins; (Eph. ii. 1;) led captive by the devil; (2 Tim. ii. 26;) in enmity against God; (Rom. viii. 7;) under the curse of a broken law; (Gal. iii. 10;) a child of wrath; (Eph. ii. 3;) a heavy burden of sin in the conscience; (Ps. xxxviii. 4;) a springing fountain of iniquity within, like the troubled sea, casting up its mire and dirt, (Isa. lvii. 20,) baffling all the efforts of an arm of flesh, taking him captive at its own pleasure. "Our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." (Isa. lxiv. 6.) Thus he truly finds himself tied and bound with the chain of his sins, and he is constrained to cry that the pitifulness of God's great mercy may loose him. He can now pray without any set form. His inward wants, like the publican's, teach him to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He knows that if he die before the burden of sin is removed from his conscience, he must be eternally lost. This makes him cry day and night; (Luke xviii. 7;) and God promises that such, in due time, shall be heard. And the due time is, when a sinner has given up all for lost, feeling himself without righteousness or strength, shut up under the law. Then God promises to appear for his deliverance. (Deut. xxxii. 36.)

Now, the way the Lord sets him at liberty is by exhibiting the sufferings and death of his Son, by which his justice is satisfied, his law magnified, his wrath appeased, and a way of reconciliation opened between God and sinners, which the apostle calls a new and living way. It being the Spirit of life from Christ Jesus which works faith in the heart to apply the atoning blood and righteousness of Christ to the conscience, by which the burden of sin and death is removed, the love of God is made known, peace is proclaimed in the conscience, the heart is enlarged, and the soul truly set at liberty. Finding rest, peace, and life in Christ, he has joy in believing.

Brentford, Sept. 28, 1808.

P. BRICE.

INQUIRY.

Sir,—Will you oblige me with your views on the following scripture? In Heb. ii. 9, speaking of Christ, it says, "That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

Yours sincerely,

J. W.

ANSWER.

We answer your Inquiry, not because there is any particular difficulty in the passage which you have quoted that requires explanation, but because it affords us an opportunity of pointing out some general principles of interpretation, which are applicable to other texts which at first sight seem favourable to universal redemption.

In all written and authoritative documents, where the meaning of any passage is doubtful or seemingly contradictory, two leading principles of interpretation are employed in order to obtain a correct solution of the difficulty: 1. The general drift of the document itself and the known intention of its author; 2. The sense of the context which stands in immediate connection with the difficult passage. Take, for instance, a doubtful or difficult expression in an Act of Parliament. How is the meaning of it to be determined when some grave and important question has to be decided by it? 1. By the general intention and spirit of the Legislature; 2. By the connection of the passage with what precedes and follows. It is by these two principles that the judges of the land decide, again and again, doubtful expressions in Acts of Parliament. The same principles are applied to decide the meaning of doubtful passages in wills, leases, and similar documents. The same two principles of interpretation, then, decide doubtful passages in the Scripture, with this immense difference and advantage, that errors and contradictions may and continually do creep into laws made and documents written by men, but not into an inspired revelation given to us by God. All such passages, therefore, as quoted by our correspondent must be interpreted by these two leading principles: 1. The analogy of faith, that is, the general mind, bearing, and spirit of the Scriptures. This is the rule laid down by the apostle to regulate our preaching, as the word "prophecy" there means: "Whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;" (Rom. xii. 6;) where it is in the original "the analogy of faith;" that is, the general harmony of truth which faith receives as a revelation from God. 2. The second principle of interpretation is the immediate connection of the passage with the context; that is, the words which go before and come after it. Now both of these principles decide for a limited and against a general sense of the expression referred to by our correspondent; "That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." 1. Apply to it the first leading principle of interpretation—the analogy of faith. Redemption, all through Scripture, is spoken of as a particular act, a price paid for individuals, by which they are delivered from death, servitude, or captivity, and are, therefore, said to be bought: "Ye are bought with a price." (1 Cor. vi. 20.) Without such a particular, personal redemption, hundreds of passages would

lose all their force and power. What force, for instance, would such passages have as these? "Thou hast redeemed *me*, O Lord God of truth." (Ps. xxxi. 5.) Where would be the force of "*me*," if all men were equally and alike redeemed? "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." (Ps. cvii. 2.) Why should *they* say so, if *all* possess the same blessing? "Fear not; I have redeemed thee." (Isa. xliii. 1.) Why "*thee*" in particular, if all others are redeemed likewise? "Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." (Rev. v. 9.) Their grateful song was that they were "redeemed out of," &c. But if all were alike redeemed, where would be their praise for special mercy? "These were redeemed from among men;" (Rev. xiv. 4;) therefore all men are not redeemed. But we need not enlarge on this point, as the Scriptures are so plain and clear upon it. When, then, any passage, such as that quoted by J. W., seems to contradict the analogy of faith, as determined from the general bearing, drift, and spirit of the word of truth, as the Scripture cannot contradict itself, we must interpret it in harmony with this analogy. 2. But now comes in the second grand principle of interpretation. The context is to be carefully examined; and the result of that will almost always be in favour of the same interpretation as is decided by the general principle. Thus if we examine Heb. ii., whence the passage quoted by J. W. is taken, we shall see that the Holy Ghost is speaking in it of a special people. Read carefully the verse following that which contains the expression, "taste death for every man:" "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." (Heb. ii. 10.) We there read of "*many sons*," and Christ is called "*the Captain*," or, as the word means, and should have been translated, "*the Author** of their salvation." The "*every man*," therefore, is the every man of those many sons, the every man of those of whose salvation Christ is the author. But now read the next three verses: "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren. In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me." (Heb. ii. 11-13.) Here the many sons are called by Christ himself his "*brethren*," and "*the children which God hath given him*."

It is plain, therefore, not only from the general analogy of faith, but from the context, that the "*every man*" for whom he tasted death means every man of the "*many sons*" whom God means to bring to glory, every man of "*the brethren*" of Christ, and of "*the children*" whom God hath given him.

These principles of interpretation, applied to similar passages, which seem at first sight to wear a universal meaning, will bring out in well nigh every case the same result.

* It is so rendered Heb. xii. 2, and in the margin of Acts iii. 15.

MEDITATIONS ON VARIOUS IMPORTANT POINTS OF OUR MOST HOLY FAITH.

I.

THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL.

WE attempted, in our last No., to show the *foundation*,—the strong and broad foundation, on which the Ministry of the Gospel rests. To have clear views of, to be well established on, this foundation, is not only most desirable, but almost indispensable, both for minister and people;—for the minister that, feeling the firmness of his standing, he may preach the gospel with authority and power, and for the people that they may receive the word from his lips in faith and love, as a message from God to their souls. To lose sight, then, of this foundation will ever bring with it loss both of power and of comfort; and it is hard to say which, in such a case, suffers most, the people or the minister.

Wherever man is, there is weakness; wherever the Lord is, there is power. Now, in the ministry of the word, above most other things, there is a continual temptation to look too much to man, and too little to the Lord. As poor wretched man is always in extremes, some of the Lord's people think too much, others too little of the minister; but whether too much or too little, the effect in both cases is much the same,—to look to the man, and to lose sight of the Lord. You that are young may so admire, if not idolise, your minister as to think that he can scarcely speak anything that is wrong; you that are old may see so much infirmity in him that you can scarcely receive from him even what you know to be truth. Both of you are in grievous fault; and though you so widely differ, the cause of your fault is the same; it is from looking off the foundation, and looking at the ministry of the gospel more as a thing of man than of God. The minister also falls into weakness the moment that he loses sight of, or gets moved off this foundation. Nor is he less in extremes than the people. Some ministers think much too highly of themselves, feeding on their own gifts and the flattery of their admirers, often the weakest and least exercised or discerning of the flock, until, forgetting they have nothing that they have not received, they are full, they are rich, and reign as kings, able to bear no rival near their throne, and full of jealousy against the most honoured of the Lord's servants, if they approach too near their own little dominion. (1 Cor. iv. 7, 8.)* Others, again, of the Lord's servants see and feel so much of their own inability, infirmities, shortcomings, and the inward stream of pollution which defiles every thought, word, and work, that their heart sinks, their hands droop, and they cannot stand before the people and deliver their

* There is a wonderful opening up and laying bare of this point in 1 Cor. iii., iv., which will amply repay examination and meditation. We will just furnish the key-note to those of our readers who may desire to see the mind of the Spirit in these two chapters. It is the contrast which the apostle draws between himself and the teachers who had supplanted him at Corinth, with the effects produced on the people by their ministry.

message with that holy boldness and firm confidence which they should maintain as servants of the living God. They, too, are looking off the foundation, and looking at self in its weakness, as the proud and puffed up at self in its strength. We see, therefore, even from these few hints, that the foundation of the ministry of the gospel is not a mere doctrinal speculation or theological theory, only fit to be discussed by divines in their studies, but a solemn truth of such practical influence, and living effect and operation, that without it the ministry is but an empty noise, of no more real value to the souls of men than a course of lectures at a Mechanics' Institute. It is for this reason that, in our last No., we took so much pains and devoted so much space to lay this foundation plainly and clearly before our readers' eyes; and as the whole of the superstructure which we hope, with God's help and blessing, to build up will rest on this foundation, we would affectionately suggest to those who are desirous or willing to receive any instruction from us, carefully to read again what we have written on this point, and compare it and all we shall advance in connection with it, with the word of truth, that we may have the sweet privilege of seeing eye to eye, and the blessed comfort of walking step by step, during the rest of our journey together.

II. We shall now, therefore, pass on to consider the second point that we proposed to examine,—the *nature* and *character* of the ministry of the gospel.

On all subjects connected with our most holy faith, it is most desirable to have clear views. Every point of divine truth is laid down with the greatest clearness and precision in the word of God. The darkness, the ignorance, the confusion which prevent us from seeing it are all in us. But as we search the Scriptures, (John v. 39,) as we meditate upon them, (1 Tim. iv. 15,) as we, by prayer and supplication draw light, life, and wisdom out of Him "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;" (Prov. ii. 3-6; James i. 5; Col. ii. 3;) and, above all, as we mix faith with what we read, (Heb. iv. 2,) there is often, if not usually, a gradual breaking-in of light; and as we follow up its heavenly rays, it shines more clearly and broadly, and the truth stands out more fully and prominently before our eyes. This is the only way in which we can be "filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding," (Col. i. 9,) and thus be established in the faith, abounding therein with thanksgiving. (Col. ii. 7.) To understand the Scripture, to see in it the mind of the Holy Spirit, to be deeply penetrated with, and inwardly possessed of the heavenly wisdom, holy instruction, and gracious revelation of the counsels and will of God unfolded therein, demands much and continual patient and prayerful study. As in business, diligence and industry lead on to prosperity and success, and sloth and idleness are the sure road to ruin, so in the greatest, most serious, and important of all business, the concerns of the soul, there is a holy diligence, a heavenly industry, whereby it thrives and grows, and there is a slothful indolence whereby it becomes clothed with rags. (Prov. xxiii. 21.) No

slothful member was ever a pillar or an ornament to a church; no slothful minister was ever a benefit or a blessing in a pulpit.

In opening this part of our subject, we shall keep as closely as we can to the Scripture, not only that we may not darken counsel by words without knowledge, but that we may speak, as far as we know and understand it, after the mind of Christ, and according to the teaching and testimony of the Holy Ghost in the word and in the heart.

The plainest, simplest idea of the nature and character of the ministry of the gospel is, that it is a *service* put into the hands, and committed to the trust of chosen men of God. We hope to show in due time what should be considered a call to the ministry of the word, but for the present let it suffice to say with the apostle: "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." (Heb. v. 4.)

We shall assume, then, that the ministers of the gospel are men chosen of God to this high and honourable employ, and by him especially qualified, commissioned, and sent to preach the word of life. By being thus chosen and set apart, they become servants of Christ and ministers of the New Testament. They are not the servants of men, (1 Cor. vii. 23,) though servants to the church for Jesus' sake; (2 Cor. iv. 5;) yea, though free from all men, are willing to make themselves servants to all, that they may win souls to Christ. (1 Cor. ix. 19.) Still less are they servants of sin, for "to whom men yield themselves servants to obey, his servants they are to whom they obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." (Rom. vi. 16.) Their grand distinguishing mark, their highest honour, their dearest privilege, is to be servants of God and of his Son Jesus Christ. Such was Paul; (Rom. i. 1; Phil. i. 1; Titus i. 1;) such was Peter; (2 Pet. i. 1;) such was Jude; (Jude 1;) and such was John; (Rev. i. 1;) and to show that this title and office were not confined to the apostles, we find that such were Timothy and Epaphras. (Phil. i. 1; 2 Tim. ii. 24; Col. iv. 12.)

There is, however, a broad and marked distinction between being a servant of Christ and being a minister of Christ, which it may be worth while to notice. The term "servant" expresses and includes all that they are to God; the term "minister" all that they are to man. Let us more fully open this, as the distinction between the two terms may not have occurred to some of our readers, and yet important practical conclusions follow from it.

1. As "servants of Christ," he alone is their Master. It was he and he alone who chose them, qualified them, commissioned them, and sent them. To him and to him alone they look for direction, instruction, food, and maintenance. His will must be their will, his word their warrant, his guidance their path, his displeasure their dread, and his approbation their reward. In proportion as they believe, feel, and realise this, will they preach his word with holy boldness, and move on in their rough and rugged path in sweet liberty and gracious confidence. There is no service so bondageing

burdensome, and miserable (that to sin only excepted) as service to man; there is no service so free, noble, and happy as service to God. Just in proportion, then, as we feel that we are servants of God, do we rise up above fear and bondage; and just in proportion as we become servants of man, do we sink down into darkness and chains.

2. But they are "ministers of Christ" as well as "servants of Christ." Observe the distinction between the two. As redeemed and called, (1 Cor. vii. 22, 23,) as followers of Christ, (John xii. 26,) as taking his yoke upon him, (Matt. xi. 29,) as having the kingdom of God set up in their heart, (Rom. xiv. 17, 18,) as of that chosen seed which is accounted to the Lord for a generation, (Ps. xxii. 30,) all the saints of God are his servants; (Rev. ii. 20;) but all are not the servants of God in the higher sense of the term, as serving him in the gospel, and, therefore, not ministers. The word minister, as distinct from servant, means one to whom is committed a service for the use and benefit of others. This may, at first sight, seem to be a distinction without a difference; but it will be found not to be so when we look at its bearings and practical results. Thus, as regards their choice, commission, and qualification, the preachers of the gospel are *servants* of Christ; but as this service is committed to them for the benefit of the people of God, they are *ministers* of Christ. They are, therefore, servants *to* the church, and *for* the church, but not servants *of* the church. They are Christ's servants, not the church's servants, for as Christ alone called them, qualified them, commissioned, and sent them, it is nothing but anti-Christian tyranny and a vile usurpation for any church to claim and treat them as its servants, and therefore make them servants of men. But as this is a narrow point, and many churches here greatly err, considering, because they choose and pay their minister, they are as much his master as a banker is to a clerk, or a draper to an assistant, we shall treat it somewhat fully, and as fairly as we can for both sides, for a minister may as much err in claiming to be a lord over God's heritage, as a church may err in degrading him into its servant.

The Lord, then, by his grace, chooses and calls men to be his servants, that they may be employed in his service for the benefit of others. He is their sole and only Master, but he uses them to accomplish his gracious purposes. This is beautifully illustrated in the instance of Paul, who seems to have been selected as the pattern of a minister, as well as of the longsuffering of Jesus Christ to them which should hereafter believe in him to life everlasting. (1 Tim. i. 16.) He received a ministry from the hands of the Lord, when he first called him by his grace: "But rise, and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee." (Acts xxvi. 16.) He therefore says of himself: "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood;" (Gal. i. 15, 16;) and again: "Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the

grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." (Eph. iii. 7, 8.) Nay, so urgently was it laid upon him that he says: "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me." (1 Cor. ix. 16, 17.) Now, we do not mean to say that we are all to have our call as clear as his, or our credentials as indisputable. We have instanced him as a pattern to show in the brightest and clearest light what is meant by a minister of the gospel, and that he is a servant of God for the use and benefit of his people. If we follow Paul from the first day when he preached Christ in the synagogues at Damascus that he is the Son of God, (Acts ix. 20,) to his last testimony when, having fought a good fight and finished his course, his departure was at hand, and he was looking and longing for his crown, (2 Tim. iv. 6-8,) his whole life and labours were for the good of others. He was ever the Lord's servant, ever "free," (1 Cor. ix. 1,) and to those who would bring him into bondage, he would give place by subjection, no, not for an hour. (Gal. ii. 4, 5.) With him it was a small thing to be judged of any man's judgment, (1 Cor. iv. 3,) and he ever stood fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made him free; (Gal. v. 1;) and yet, though thus fully and blessedly free from all men, he made himself servant unto all, that he might gain the more. (1 Cor. ix. 19.) The more that Paul's life and labours, experience, example, and words are studied and meditated upon, the clearer will be our views of the ministry of the gospel, and the more distinctly shall we see the line which separates the true ministers of Christ from the false apostles, the deceitful workers, who transform themselves into the apostles of Christ. (2 Cor. xi. 13.) We see in him the union of the highest liberty with the lowest service; of the fullest freedom from man with the greatest devotedness to man; of the most glorious revelations of Christ with the most toilsome labours, severe sufferings, painful privations that could be endured for his name's sake; and though not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles, yet in his own eyes ever less than the least of all saints and the chief of sinners. (2 Cor. xi. 5; Eph. iii. 8; 1 Tim. i. 15.)

The word "ministry," then, as we have pointed out, and conspicuously seen in him, implies a service for the benefit of others. It is now, therefore, necessary to show its *nature and character*.

Its leading feature and grand distinguishing character is that it is the *ministry of the New Testament*; in other words, that it is a gracious means of communicating the blessings of the new covenant to the souls of men. In 2 Cor. iii. the apostle, by contrasting in various points the law and the gospel, very clearly and beautifully unfolds what the nature and character of the ministry of the New Testament is. If we carefully examine this chapter, and trace out the line of argument contained in it, we shall see that the apostle lays down six or

seven points in which the ministry of the two covenants stands in broad contrast and visible distinction from each other. He prefaces this contrast by the words: "Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament;" and closes it with: "Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not." (2 Cor. iv. 1.) We have thought, therefore, that we could not, in opening this part of our subject, better break ground than by tracing out the points of distinction laid down by the apostle.

The different points of contrast thus laid down are these: 1. One is letter, the other spirit; 2. One killeth, the other giveth life; 3. One ministers condemnation, the other righteousness; 4. The one genders to bondage, the other to freedom; 5. The one is veiled, as the face of Moses, the other unveiled, as the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; 6. The one is done away, the other abideth; 7. The one leaves the hearer dead in his sins, the other leads him on, step by step, from glory to glory. Let us pursue the thread of argument as thus laid down.

1. The first distinctive feature of the ministry of the gospel is that it is "the ministration of the *Spirit*." This is its distinguishing glory. The law is but the letter, written and engraven in stones; but believers are "the epistle of Christ, written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshy* tables of the heart." There was indeed a glory of its own in the law, as typified by the glory of the face of Moses when he came down from the Mount; but this glory fades and grows pale by the side of the glory of the gospel. "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?" (2 Cor. iii. 7, 8.) The apostle, therefore, asks the Galatians, "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal. iii. 2.) And again, "He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal. iii. 5.) The "hearing of faith" means the gospel, as is plain from Romans x. 14-17. When Peter preached the gospel in the house of Cornelius, we read: "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." (Acts x. 44.) So was it at the memorable day of Pentecost. (Acts ii. 38, 39.) So under Paul's preaching at Antioch in Pisidia; (Acts xiii. 52;) at Ephesus; (Acts xix. 6;) at Thessalonica; (1 Thess. i. 5, 6;) at Corinth. (2 Cor. xi. 4.) And though in those days there were extraordinary gifts of the Spirit which were gradually withdrawn as the canon of

* This word is sometimes quoted, and even printed in some Bibles "fleshly;" but in the original, as in our version, the words are distinct both in form and meaning. "Fleshy" signifies soft and tender—the heart of flesh as distinct from the heart of stone; (Ezek. xxxvi. 26;) whereas "fleshly" means what is corrupt and evil, (2 Cor. i. 12; ~~Col. iii. 10~~ Pet. ii. 11,) and is generally translated "carnal."

the Scripture was closing, yet the peculiar glory of the ministry is still the same as "the ministration of the Spirit." If the question be asked, "What is meant by the ministration of the Spirit?" we answer, the means whereby the Spirit is communicated to the souls of men. And if it be further asked, "How does the gospel do this?" we reply, that the Holy Spirit uses it as a means of communicating his graces, operations, and influences, for he works in and by the word; and when he himself comes and dwells in the soul, making the body his temple, it is not in a visionary way, without the word, but through the gospel coming "in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." (1 Thess. i. 5.) This is beautifully opened up by the apostle: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." (Eph. i. 13, 14.) He traces out four distinct and progressive steps: 1. They heard the word of truth, the gospel of their salvation; 2. They believed in the Son of God, as preached in this gospel; 3. They were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise; 4. He became, by his indwelling, the earnest of their inheritance. (Compare Rom. viii. 9, 23.) It is thus that the preached gospel is "the ministration of the Spirit."

2. It is, therefore, also the ministration of *life*; for "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." (2 Cor. iii. 6.) By the word "spirit" here is meant, not the Holy Spirit, but the gospel as being, as we have shown, the ministration of the Spirit; and by "the letter" is meant, not the letter of the gospel, but the law which was given in letters on the two tables of stone, and which is said to kill, as cursing and condemning all found under it, and slaying the soul that is brought under its inward sentence. The gospel, then, in the hands of the servants of God, is a ministration of life; for, as made life and spirit to the soul, one part of its work is to quicken dead sinners into spiritual life. God is said, therefore, "to beget us with the word of truth," (James i. 18,) and the regenerate are declared to "be born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." (1 Pet. i. 23.) Jesus is the Life, (John xiv. 6,) and as such he quickeneth whom he will; (John v. 21;) but it is through his word that he quickeneth; for he has "the words of eternal life," and the words that he speaks, "they are spirit and they are life." (John vi. 63, 68.) "In him was life" originally and eternally, (John i. 4,) and that life he communicates to those who are his, even that "eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began, but hath in due times manifested his word through preaching." (Titus i. 2, 3.) And as through the gospel this life is communicated, so it is through the gospel that it is maintained. How many a poor dying soul, condemned by law, condemned by conscience, has been brought out and up into the light, life, and liberty of the gospel by the preached word. How many a drooping head has been raised up, how many a backsliding heart recovered and healed, how many a cold, lifeless frame warmed

into life and feeling, how many a hard, frozen soul, apparently impenetrable to love or fear, has in a moment, by one soft word spoken by a servant of God, been softened, melted, and dissolved into a flood of contrition, humility, and brokenness before the Lord, in which it was hard to say which most prevailed, love to him, or hatred of self. We cannot enlarge on this point, but every servant of God will have his own thankful record, his own grateful Ebenezers, how the gospel has been made a ministration of life to him, and through him of life to others.

3. Another feature of the gospel, as a service committed to the trust of the servants of Christ, is that it is a ministration of *righteousness*. The law was a ministration of condemnation, and it was given for that purpose, as the apostle so cogently argues: "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. iii. 19, 20.) And again: "Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid; for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." (Gal. iii. 21, 22.) As, then, the law is the ministration of condemnation, so the gospel is the ministration of righteousness, and the two are therefore contrasted by the apostle in the chapter before us: "For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." (2 Cor. iii. 9.) But in what sense is the gospel, and especially the preached gospel, "the ministration of righteousness?" In this, that it preaches, holds forth, and instrumentally brings near the righteousness of Christ as that by which, and by which alone, we are justified before God. The apostle, therefore, says: "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. iii. 21-24.) "The righteousness of God" here spoken of is not God's own personal, intrinsic righteousness, whereby he is eternally holy and just, but the way by which he justifies a sinner and accounts him righteous. Now this is "without the law," that is, distinct from and independent of the law, but is manifested,—where? In and by the gospel, through which it is proclaimed and made openly known. He therefore adds: "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." (Rom. iii. 25.) Where hath God "set Christ forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood?" In and by the gospel, as he further adds: "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness;

that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Rom. iii. 26.) "To declare at this time his righteousness." What time? The time of the gospel. And how declare it? By the preached word. It is thus that "the gospel is made the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;" for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God;" and as faith believes what God declares, it receives justification from the mouth of God. To proclaim, reveal, and seal this upon the heart is the grand and effectual province and work of the gospel: "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts xiii. 38, 39.) As the gospel, then, when preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, (1 Pet. i. 12,) is made a means of lodging this sentence of justification in the heart, it is emphatically "the ministration of righteousness." No one was ever justified but by faith. And by faith in whom? In Jesus Christ. But how was this faith raised up in the heart? By the gospel which testifies of him reaching the heart as a word from God, for "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." (Rom. x. 10.) The Lord says, "I bring near my righteousness." (Isa. xli. 13.) But how and where? In and by and through the gospel, for "therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith." (Rom. i. 17.) If, then, the gospel be, as thus explained, the ministration of righteousness, we may well ask, How can any man, be it in church or chapel, be a servant of God or a minister of Jesus Christ who does not preach full and free justification by Christ and Christ alone, as the LORD our righteousness? (Jer. xxiii. 6;) as "of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption?" (1 Cor. i. 30.)

4. The next distinguishing feature of the gospel as a ministration is, that it is a ministry of *liberty*: "Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." (2 Cor. iii. 17.) The law knows nothing and speaks nothing of liberty. On the contrary, it "gendereth to bondage," that is, begets in every one under its sensible spirit and influence a most miserable state of mind under which he becomes shut up as in a prison-house under its condemning sentence, aggravated by the accusations of a guilty conscience, the fear of death, the dread of judgment, and the temptations of the devil. Now, as opposed to and contrasted with this miserable ministry of bondage, the gospel proclaims and brings liberty. Thus the blessed Lord read and applied to himself the prophecy of Isaiah lxi. in the synagogue of Nazareth: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." (Luke iv. 18, 19.) The same anointing which rested on him as the Head without measure, (John iii. 34,)

rests on his ministers according to their measure, for to every one of his servants is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ, (Eph. iv. 7; 1 Cor. xii. 11,) and they have an anointing which they have received of him. (1 John ii. 27.) As, then, he preached liberty to the captives, so do his ministering servants proclaim the opening of the prison to them that are bound, by holding forth the forgiveness of sins through his precious blood. As, then, they thus preach peace by Jesus Christ, (Acts x. 36,) and the Spirit attends their testimony with power, it comes with a blessed liberating influence into the heart. Nothing can stand before the power of the gospel. Every lock, bar, and bolt must give way when "the Breaker comes up, and their King passes before them, and the LORD at the head of them, (Micah ii. 13,) to break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron. (Isa. xlv. 2.) The gospel is "the perfect law of liberty," (James i. 25,) therefore the very perfection of liberty. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus," is the pure language of the gospel; and if no condemnation, no bondage; for what brings the soul into bondage? The guilt of sin lying on a burdened conscience, with an evil heart of unbelief suggesting a thousand gloomy fears, and shutting out, as it were, the sweet voice of mercy. We often get, it is true, into bondage, but never through the gospel, but rather from not believing the gospel; nor can we be delivered from bondage but through the gospel, and by believing the glad tidings which it proclaims and brings. As, then, the servants of Christ preach the gospel in its purity and power, and the blessed Spirit, by attending and accompanying their word to the heart, reveals the love, and blood, and grace of the Lord the Lamb, and faith is given to receive and believe it, the soul is brought forth, according to the strength of its faith, out of this miserable bondage into the liberty of truth, according to the Lord's promise: "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." (John viii. 32.)

5. The next point of contrast is, that the law was a veiled dispensation; whereas the gospel is an *unveiled* one. That the law was what we have termed a veiled dispensation was plainly shown by the veil of the temple, and more especially, as the apostle here argues, by the veil over the face of Moses. But it was a veiled glory—veiled under a worldly sanctuary (Heb. ix. 1) and a multitude of rites, ceremonies, and sacrifices, and what the apostle calls "carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation;" that is, the time of the gospel. (Heb. ix. 10.) But as opposed to and distinct from this, the gospel is an unveiled dispensation; for the old veil is done away in Christ.

But as our space is gone, we must defer the consideration of this point to our next No.

To a lively believer, who enjoys continual fellowship with God, every day is a Sabbath and every meal a sacrament.—*Toplady.*

MAY 1, 1866.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

MAY, 1866.

MATT. V. 6; 2 TIM. I. 9; ROM. XI. 7; ACTS VIII. 37, 38; MATT. XXVIII. 19.

NOTES OF A SERMON PREACHED
BY MR. PHILPOT, AT CROYDON, LORD'S DAY MORNING,
APRIL 16, 1865.

"Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord; his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth."—HOSEA vi. 3.

(Concluded from p. 106.)

II. But we now come to the second part of our text,—*the promise*. "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord."

"Then shall we know." There is, then, no doubt about it. It is one of the Lord's "I wills," and "Ye shall!" What fixedness, what firmness are here! But, if you observe, there is here what is called an ellipsis, that is, a designed omission of some words to complete the sense, and this omission is of the things which we shall know. But may we not fill up this ellipsis by bringing from other parts of the Scripture promises of what things we are made to know by the teaching and testimony of the blessed Spirit? As the apostle speaks: "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." (1 Cor. ii. 12.) The things, then, which we shall know are "the things that are freely given to us of God." These are too many to enumerate, for they comprehend every spiritual blessing with which God has blessed us, already blessed us, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. I can only, therefore, name a few of them.

1. The first which I shall name is contained in the words which the Lord spake to those Jews of whom we read that "they believed on him." It is true that their faith was, as the event proved, but a natural and temporary faith; but the Lord's words still stand good to those who believe in him with a spiritual, living, and lasting faith: "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." (John viii. 31, 32.) This promise assures them of two things; first, of a *knowledge of the truth*; secondly, of an experience of its *liberating power*. You may often fear that, with all your long profession, you

do not know the truth. Your mind is often so dark and confused, and you are from time to time so tossed about, that it seems as if you do not know the truth, that is, rightly and savingly for yourself, and that you never will know it. But you shall. Here is the Lord's own promise for it. It shall be sealed upon your heart by a divine power, and you shall know it by the teaching and testimony of the blessed Spirit in your own soul. And you shall also know the sweet liberty of truth, the efficacious power of it in your own bosom, and the giving way of every bond and shackle under its melting influence; for "the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing." This is receiving the love of the truth so as to be saved thereby, (2 Thess. ii. 10,) and enjoying the blessing of which the psalmist speaks: "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." (Ps. lxxxix. 15.)

2. But what else shall you know? The *pardon of all your sins*; the blotting out of all your transgressions. There are those here, it may be, that truly fear God, who do not yet know that. You have many hopes and expectations; and sometimes these rise very high, for there is what the apostle calls "the full assurance of hope," (Heb. vi. 11,) as well as "the full assurance of faith." (Heb. x. 22.) But because you cannot rise up into the sweet assurance of forgiven sin, you often fear that you are wrong altogether. But if you follow on to know the Lord, he will sooner or later speak to you the pardoning word, and say, "Go in peace, for thy sins are forgiven thee."

3. But you shall also know *more than you yet ever have known* of the Lord Jesus Christ. From what you have seen and known of him already, you are following on to know him more. But you have not seen a thousandth part of what he is to those who believe in his name. You shall know his faithfulness to every promise, his suitability to every want and woe, and what he is in all his covenant offices and gracious relationships to all who look unto him: He will bring you to the spot to which he brought Paul: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.) You will thus learn to live a life of faith on the Son of God; and, as Bunyan speaks in his "Grace Abounding," find what it is for him "to stand by you at all turns." You will learn the riches of his grace as superabounding over all the aboundings of your sin; the efficacy of his precious blood to cleanse your conscience from guilt, filth, and dead works; the blessedness of his righteousness to cover your needy, naked soul; and the sweetness of his dying love shed abroad in your heart, with his strength made perfect in your weakness to support you in every trying hour. In fact, what is there which you shall not know? The text seems given to us like a blank cheque, signed by a man of wealth, with permission for us to fill it up with any sum that we please. Fill up the cheque, then, with as large a sum as your faith can muster courage to do; and when you

have done that, you will still fall far short of the intentions of the donor. God will pay it in full, for he will surely keep back from you nothing that is good for you to know.

Follow on, then, follow on to know the Lord. Never be satisfied till you cash the cheque and get the money, and when you have got it, ask for more, and be ever crying, "More faith, more hope, more love, more power, Lord, more vital godliness, more spirituality of mind, more conformity to thine image, more knowledge of thy will and desire to do it, more unfitness for the world, more fitness for heaven." Ever keep following on, and you will find that the more you know of the Lord, his truth will be more and more felt in its preciousness in your soul.

It is true that with it you will also know plenty of trials, afflictions, and cutting strokes; for it is through much tribulation we are to enter the kingdom, and sufferings and blessings, trials and deliverances, always go hand in hand. The apostle even prayed that he might know "the fellowship of Christ's sufferings;" viewing that knowledge as even a greater blessing than to know the power of his resurrection.

But once more consider the words, "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord," and do apply them to your own case. I have already said that there is an "if." This "if" stands, so to speak, as an angel at the head of the way, to keep out those who are not following on to know the Lord, and to let in those who are. Now, if you are following on, you have a testimony, not only that the Lord has planted his fear in your heart, but has given you a gracious promise to hold you up in the strait and narrow way. Keep firmly, then, in the way in which he has planted your footsteps. Do not listen to erroneous men. Deal with them as the church did at Ephesus, to whom the Lord testifies, "I know how thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars." (Rev. ii. 2.) Read no erroneous books, which, in our days, so awfully abound. Keep close to truth, close to conscience, close to a preached gospel; close to the things which God has shown you, and of which you have felt the savour and the power. Be this ever the desire of your soul, to know the Lord in the sweet manifestations of his Person and work, his blood and love, and he will reveal to you everything which shall be for your good and his glory.

III. But I now come to our last and third point,—the *mode of the fulfilment* of the promise, and, indeed, I ought to add, the *certainty of its execution*.

i. We may look at the last point first.

1. Observe how the execution of the promise is spoken of as the Lord's "going forth," and that this going forth is compared to two things: First, it is prepared as the morning; and secondly, he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth. Is not the morning "prepared?" Before the morning comes, say, when you lie down at night, have you any doubt whether to-morrow's sun will rise? Do you not close your eyes in sleep with a cer-

tain persuasion that the sun will rise at its due hour to give light upon the earth, and to call you to your daily work? The going forth of Jesus for the salvation of his people is as certain as the rising of to-morrow's sun. As sure as the morning will come to-morrow, so surely will Jesus go forth according to the promise of our text. And is there not something sweet as well as significant in the word "prepared?" There is a preparation for the sun to rise; and that not only that he may come out of his chamber as a bridegroom, and rejoice as a strong man to run a race, but as issuing out of preceding darkness, and making all things light before him. How the morning springs out of the shades of night! Is it not always night before morning? We have not always daylight with us. What a dark night of sorrow and trouble often precedes God's morning; darker than the night which precedes the rising of the natural sun. How often mists and fogs also obscure the sun when he begins to rise. Yet it is the morning, and they will be soon dispersed. So the Lord will as certainly come to manifest himself to your soul if you are following on. But does not the morning come very gradually? But before the sun rises, a preparation is made for his appearing. His beams and rays, while he himself is still below the horizon, streak and lace the eastern sky as harbingers of his coming. And sometimes the morning star glitters like a diamond in the east, heralding his approach and proclaiming his speedy appearance. So it is often in grace; I will not say always, for sometimes the Sun of righteousness bursts at once out of the dark shades of night. But often, if not usually, the Lord's going forth in grace is prepared as the morning in nature. There are beams and rays of the coming morning before the Sun himself rises upon the soul; some gracious breaking in of coming mercy, some dawnings of hope, some expectations of manifested salvation; ("My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him." Ps. lxxii. 5;) some good reading, hearing, or praying times; some glimpses, glances, and transient sights of the King in his beauty, enabling the heart to feel and the tongue to say, "O Lord, how precious art thou to my soul." All these preparations precede and herald the bridegroom coming out of his chamber. And sometimes spiritually there shines forth, when the day dawns, the morning star, "the day-star" spoken of in Peter as arising in the heart; which we may, perhaps, understand as some promise applied to the soul with special unction and power as a prophecy of coming good. But in due time the Sun himself comes in a blessed revelation of Christ to the soul; a gracious manifestation of the Son of God in the glory of his Person, and the efficacy of his blood, righteousness, and finished work. Thus "his going forth is prepared as the morning." How certain, O how blessed is this promise to every waiting, expecting, longing, and desiring soul, which can find neither rest nor peace until the Lord himself appears and personally manifests himself as all its salvation and all its desire.

2. But we have another figure given to us in our text scarcely inferior in certainty, or in the fulness of its blessing: "He shall

come to us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth."

In Palestine there were but two seasons in the year when rain fell. It fell first in the autumn, about the equinox; that is, the latter part of September and the beginning of October. I say "first fell" because the civil year of the Jews began in the autumn, in the month Tisri, corresponding to the last half of our September, and the first half of our October. This rain, therefore, is called the former or early rain. Until that fell, from the hardness of the soil, baked by the burning summer sun, they could not plough the ground to receive the seed. But the frequent showers of this former or early rain, for it began with gentle showers, broke down the hard clods, and the seed being then committed to the furrow, the same rain, falling more copiously, made it germinate and grow. It was then, therefore, they sowed their wheat and barley. Then there came a cold winter, with showers of hail and snow. But about the end of March and through April rain fell again, called "the latter rain," as coming later in the year, which prepared the corn for the early harvest, which, for barley, was about the Passover, when they presented the first-fruits of the barley harvest. The wheat, ripening later, was not cut till near Pentecost, or 50 days afterwards, when the first-fruits of the wheat harvest were presented at that feast, which fell about the middle of May. I have explained these things to throw light upon the figure here given us of "the latter and former rain." Now these two seasons of rain were so certain in the Holy Land that they might be looked for as certainly as the rising of the sun; for, indeed, without them the land could not have been cultivated, and the people would have died of famine.

But now for the spiritual meaning of this figure of the latter and former rain. Two things are implied in it; first, *Certainty*; secondly, *Blessing*.

First, then, *Certainty*. "He shall come unto us as the rain." Do we not see certainty here? But for its certainty of fulfilment, where would be the promise as a promise? How could it be one of "all the promises of God which in Christ are Yea and in Christ Amen," if it were not to be certainly fulfilled? (2 Cor. i. 20.) Hosea spoke to a people who were certain that these rains would come in their appointed season. The very life of the nation depended upon them. But even if, for the wickedness of man, the Lord should, as Solomon speaks, "shut up the heaven, that there should be no rain," or even if the Lord carried out in nature his declaration by the prophet: "And also I have withholden the rain from you when there were yet three months to the harvest," (Amos iv. 7,) yet he will not deal so with his people in grace.

But let us now look at the *blessedness* of the promise, and see how far we may find in it a spiritual description of the Lord's gracious dealings. May we not, then, compare the first work of grace upon the heart, the softening influences of the blessed Spirit in the soul, with the former or early rain? Is not some softening influence needed to break the hard heart and make it tender, that

there may be a tilth for the seed of the word to lodge in, that it may germinate and grow, and not perish under the clods? "God," says Job, "maketh my heart soft;" (Job xxiii. 16;) and the Lord's own word to Josiah was, "Because thine heart was tender." (2 Kings xxii. 19.) Is not this softness and tenderness also what is intimated by the prophet? "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you a heart of flesh." (Ezek. xxxvi. 26.)

But in the east, as I have observed, frequent showers precede the fuller and more copious rainfall—sufficient to soften the clods for the plough, and yet hardly enough to make the seed spring up and grow. So in grace. The Lord's people have not at first usually copious showers. They have sprinklings and waterings sufficient to soften the heart, and to allow, so to speak, room for the plough of conviction to make a deep furrow and prepare a suitable seedbed for the word of life to fall into and grow in. But when Christ is revealed to the soul, the heart is broken under a sight and sense of his bleeding, dying love; and godly sorrow for sin with real contrition breaks the heart all to pieces. This may be called the former rain in its more copious showers, for then the truth takes deep root downwards and springs forth upwards. The hard clods have been already broken under kindly showers and gracious convictions. But the fulness of the former rain is not yet come. It is often in grace as in nature. Farmers will sometimes say, "This little rain is not enough after such a long dry season. We want a day's rain, at least,—a good soaking rain, to go down into the depth of the soil." So spiritually. The first sprinklings and little showers of heavenly grace are enough to soften the hard clods; but they do not go deep enough; something still is wanting for the word of life to take root and bear fruit. Now, this seems to be when the heart is softened and melted by a gracious discovery of the Lord Jesus to the soul; for then the truth is so commended to the conscience, and brought into the heart, that it strikes a root into the innermost affections, called, in Scripture, receiving the love of the truth. (2 Thess. ii. 10.)

Now, look at these two things, that you may judge for yourself whether you have had the early or former rain. View it in its first sprinklings, and view it in its more copious outpourings. Have you had your heart softened so that the plough of conviction has drawn a furrow in it? This is good, for it is the first falling of the former rain. Then look if you have had the fuller shower, in some discovery or manifestation of the blessed Lord. But you may depend upon it that great blessings are very rare. There are dews which keep the soul alive, as in the Holy Land the heavy dews kept vegetation alive during the interval of the two seasons of rain. "I will be as the dew unto Israel." (Hos. xiv. 5.) "My head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night." (Song Sol. v. 2.) But a copious rainfall, a thorough blessing, is only at certain seasons; and we may be truly thankful if we can lay our hand upon one or two memorable spots in our experience, and believe that at such and such a time we had a real soul-blessing from God.

But I now come to "the latter rain," which, though put first in our text was called latter because it fell after the other, and, as I before intimated, in the early spring. I observed, also, that this rain was to prepare for the harvest, enabling the ground to put forth its strength and fill the ear with corn, that it might not be shrivelled with drought, but well filled with the fat of the wheat. May we not apply this to the experience of a soul in its latter stages? When the Lord is going to take one of his dear people home to himself, he often gives him a good copious shower of the latter rain to ripen him for the harvest. How often do we find that when a saint of God comes to his dying bed, the Lord breaks in upon his soul with his love and mercy. Does not this seem to be the last showers which fall upon the soul to make it ripe for the sickle of death? And is it not the desire of your soul to have upon your deathbed these manifestations of the love and mercy of God which will carry you happily through the dark valley of the shadow of death, that, as has been said, you may then have nothing to do but die?

But though I have thus opened and explained the figure, I by no means wish to confine to it the free grace of the gospel. This would be to limit that which is unlimited, and to cramp that which is free. As a figure, it beautifully represents the certainty and blessedness of the gracious comings of Christ; but we must not think that there are no comings of his power and presence but those which strictly correspond with the figure. A figure at best is but a figure, and must not be strained beyond its due place among other figures; as if, like Aaron's rod, this one figure swallowed up all the rest. Do not think that because the latter and the former rain are spoken of, as I have explained, according to the figure, that there are no other showers but those of the former and latter rain. There are, as in our own climate, showers at other besides these set and peculiar times. At any rate, there are often little sprinklings and gentle bedewings where there are no copious showers. If you get a good hearing-time under a sermon, a sweet visitation on your knees, a blessed opening up of God's truth to your soul, a softening and melting of heart by some unexpected glimpse or glance of the Lord in his blessedness and beauty, highly prize them. These may be considered by some small things, scarcely worth notice; but "who hath despised the day of small things?" (Zech. iv. 10.) Is any thing small that comes from God, or that leads to him? Look for and expect great things; but prize small things. Only mind that, whether great or small, they are *real*. Look at the things which you experience in a way of mercy and grace, as narrowly as a jeweller looks at stones which are brought to him by a stranger for him to buy, as if diamonds or rubies. He does not take it for certain that they are real jewels, because they are offered him as such. He carefully examines them before he pronounces them to be diamonds, and wants also to know whether they were honestly come by. Deal with your mercies and blessings as he does, not only to examine them carefully, but after he has ascertained their reality. They all are precious; but they are not all equally precious.

The larger, clearer, and brighter are more valuable than the smaller and less brilliant. When you get a blessing, be it small or great, do you not often say, "Is it real, Lord? Is it truly of God?" You may have feelings of sorrow or joy—sorrow for sin, or joy in the Lord; but are those feelings wrought in your soul by the Holy Ghost? You may have various marks and evidences of divine life; but have you a divine warrant to believe that they are of God? The reality of your religion must be tried one day; try it now. If a man has a reality in him, it will stand the keenest trial. I remember once going to the Bank of England to get a note cashed. When I presented it to the clerk, he first looked at me hard in the face, I suppose to see whether I had a roguish appearance, and next he compared my note with a list which hung by his side, to see, I suppose, whether mine was one that was forged, or of which payment had been stopped. I did not flinch. I knew the note was good. But suppose it had been forged or payment of it stopped; the next thing might have been for a bank porter to take me by the shoulder, or a policeman to carry me before the Lord Mayor. So you need not be afraid of a searching ministry, if it searches the very core of your heart. Men of God do not stand up to flatter people, or pay with solid cash the forged or stolen notes of mere professors. They would do everything, indeed, to encourage God's family; that is their work and office; but they cannot and will not stand in the name of God and deceive people, be they sinners or saints; for of all deceivers a pulpit deceiver is the worst. We have heard much lately of burglars breaking into shops of watchmakers and carrying off much valuable property; but even their guilt seems less than that of robbing and plundering the souls of men. But I must pause. As the Lord's ministers cannot be deceivers, so the Lord's people cannot be deceived. And may I not add that whatever ministers and people be, or turn out to be, he never can, he never will, deceive his people, who has declared that his going forth is prepared as the morning; and that he will come unto them as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.

THERE are two lessons which God every day gives his elect; one, to see their own faults; the other, the goodness of God.—*Quarles*.

ANOTHER evidence of true faith is that a just man is to live by it. The apostle says, "The life that I now live (while I am in the flesh), I live by the faith of the Son of God;" but prior to this he lived by his own good deeds, till the commandment came, and sin revived; then he died, and death, in the sentence of the law, reigned over him, till Christ was revealed in him, and it is plain he after lived on him, by him, and in him. By this faith of Christ he found access into the grace, favour, and love of God. By this faith, acceptance with God. By this faith of Christ, and for the sake of this Christ he expected every fresh supply of grace and strength according to his day of trials, and through this faith, which centred in Christ and in the promises of God in him, he expected to be kept. Expected, did I say? He believed God would keep him from evil to the end, and give him a crown of righteousness and glory; and every possessor of true faith lives in the same manner, if not in so high a degree.—*Beeman*.

THE GOSPEL MESSAGE.

"I send thee to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light; and from the power of Satan unto God; that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."—Acts xxvi. 17, 18.

It appears by the context, that these words were addressed by the Lord Jesus Christ to Saul, afterwards called Paul, at the memorable time of his conversion; and according to all human reasoning on the subject, a more unfit person could not have been selected for the errand on which the Lord sent him; for he was an enemy to him, and a persecutor of those to whom he was sent. He thought with himself, he says, that he *ought* to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and *did them*, shutting up the saints in prison, and giving his voice against some that were put to death, and persecuting them to strange cities. He was, as he confessed to Timothy, "a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious." But the Lord, who doeth all things "according to the good pleasure of his will," and who has declared that, "he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy," and who "chooseth the foolish things of this world to confound the wise; and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world, and things which are despised, that no flesh shall glory in his presence," chose the blaspheming, persecuting, injurious Saul, to be a messenger of his mercy to those whom he had "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world."

The Lord always had his eye upon Paul for this work, and designed, in his own good time, to call him to it, and qualify him for it. He separated him from his mother's womb, and called him by his grace, that he might preach Christ among the heathen. (Gal. i. 15.)

He separated him for the work of the ministry from eternity, even as he had separated Jeremiah, and said unto him: "Before I formed thee, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." (Jer. i. 5.) The Lord separated Paul for the work of the ministry before he was born, or had done good or evil; and in his own good time called him by his grace, when in the act of doing evil. Yea, when his set time was come, fixed in the Divine Mind in eternity, for there is a set time to favour Zion, the Lord called this blaspheming, persecuting, injurious man, out of his natural darkness, blindness, and ignorance, into gospel light and knowledge, and sweetly inclined him, by the power of his grace, to love those people whom he had persecuted; to preach that gospel which he had hated, and to serve that Lord against whose name he had done many things. And the Lord said, "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles;" that is, to preach the gospel, of which Christ was the sum and substance. He was to preach it to the Jews indeed, and when they put it away from them, which they would, he was to preach it to the Gentiles; and the Lord tells us in the text, still more explicitly, *why* he sent him forth to preach the gospel: "I send thee," said he, "to open th-

them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified, by faith that is in me." He was sent to those whom God the Father had "chosen in his Son Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love,"—that portion of mankind whom the Father gave to the Son to be saved by him from the ruin and destruction which Adam's fall would bring upon the world, but who partake of the corrupt nature of Adam like other men, and are by nature enemies to God, and deserving of his wrath, even as others; a people whom Peter describes as, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God," but who, by Adam's transgression, became both guilty and filthy, and blind as to spiritual things; who "love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil:" and are under the power and dominion of Satan, by whom they are led captive at his will, and do his works. But as God designed that these, his chosen ones, should be redeemed from their fallen state, and fitted to serve him on earth and to live with him in glory; and as he usually works by means, so, to effect his purpose towards them, he sends ministers to them duly qualified for the work of the ministry, to preach the gospel to them. By this means he first opens their hearts to feel their lost state by nature; the exceeding sinfulness of sin; the plague of their own hearts; the impurity of their nature; their inability to do that which is spiritually good; the imperfection of their obedience, and the insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify them; and having done this for them, by his gospel as the means, and by his ministers as instruments, he lets them see where help is laid, and where salvation is to be had; to behold Christ as the only, able, willing, complete, and suitable Saviour; and to see that there is in him life, righteousness, peace, pardon, grace, and glory.

The elect of God, like other men, come into the world in the dark, ignorant of God and the perfections of his nature; in the dark about sin, and the evil that is in it and that comes by it; and ignorant of the way of peace, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; ignorant of the Spirit's work in regeneration and sanctification upon the heart; ignorant about the scriptures and the doctrines of the gospel, which they cannot understand; as Paul says: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." But when God in his own time effectually calls his chosen ones, by his gospel preached by faithful ministers, they are turned from this their natural darkness to God, who is light itself, and to Christ, the light of the world, "a light to lighten the Gentiles," and to the light of the word. Paul says, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts." As when "light was upon the face of the deep," God said, "Let there be light," so there is a natural darkness in the minds of men, until a spiritual light is infused into them; and as light is given by the almighty power, so is the opening of the eyes of the naturally blind; and as light was a

creation of that which was not before, so the work of grace on the soul, is not an increase, or an improvement of the light of nature, but is a new light created in the understanding.

The hearts of men, by nature, are like what this world was before God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, having no light in them. But God is to them as the sun to the natural world, and shines upon them and in them, so as to give them a true light and sense of sin, and of their lost state and condition, and enables them to see the fulness and suitableness of Christ. And this God effects by his word, as the psalmist says: "The entrance of thy word giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple." As soon as the Lord opens the hearts of his people, as he opened the heart of Lydia, that his word, through his power and grace, may have a place there; then "the entrance of the word giveth understanding to the simple." It gives knowledge of divine and spiritual things, to those who have not that learning or knowledge in worldly things which others have; for, "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." But while the things of the gospel are hid from the wise and prudent men of the world, they are revealed unto babes, simple ones, even as it seems good in the Father's sight; and Christ, by his Spirit, "opens their understandings, that they may understand the Scriptures," and those things "which make them wise unto salvation," and which make for their spiritual peace and eternal welfare.

Now when God has done this for his chosen people; when, by the gospel as the means and by his ministers as instruments, he has opened their eyes, and "called them out of darkness into his marvellous light;" he does not stop here, but goes on "to turn them from Satan unto God." Satan has such great power over the men of the world that he is called "the prince of the world," and "the God of this world;" and he rules over the souls of reprobate men, as in his own kingdom. He is as "a strong armed man that keepeth his palace and his goods in peace;" for those over whom he rules have no concern about sin, make no inquiry after salvation, have no dread of the curses of the law, and no fear of hell; all seems to be hushed and still with them; and he not only dwells in the hearts of unregenerated men, but works effectually there, stirring up their bad passions and putting evil things into their minds. He is suffered, by God's permission, to "blind the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them;" and to set them against the gospel and those that preach it; and thus they are "led by him as captives at his will," and do his lusts. And this is the deplorable state of God's own people, till he sends forth his gospel to them in the hands of faithful ministers, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light; and then they are set free, not indeed from the temptations of Satan, but from his rule, and power, and dominion. Then they are turned away from him to have true knowledge of God; to love him and all that belongs to him, his word, his law, his ordinances, his people, and his faithful ministers as sent by him; to believe in him not only as the God of nature, but of providence and grace; to have communion with

him; and to yield a cheerful evangelical obedience to his commands.

But God not only sends forth his gospel to his chosen ones "to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto himself;" but that they may "receive forgiveness of sins." And what greater blessing can God bestow on his sinful creatures than the full forgiveness of their sins, as an act of his free grace, through the blood of Christ shed for them? The gospel is a proclamation of the love, grace, and mercy of God to his elect people in Christ. It is a message of mercy to his children, to tell them they are pardoned through the blood of Christ, and justified by his righteousness, and that God is "pacified towards them for all that they have done, for Christ's sake." This is "the good news" from a far country, which ministers of the gospel proclaim to convinced sinners, and which makes even the sound of their feet delightful; as the apostle says, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." And let it be remembered that this great blessing of forgiveness is not purchased or procured by the merits of men; but the Lord sends forth the gospel proclamation, that his people, made sensible of their sins and of their danger, may receive with joy and gratitude this great blessing provided for them in the covenant of grace, as the free gift of God; and, by the preached gospel, he communicates to them the precious grace of faith; for as the apostle says, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Yea, they receive by faith that great blessing of forgiveness, promised in covenant to Christ for them, and which he has procured for them by his obedience and death. And we have the promise in God's own handwriting: "I will forgive their iniquity; and I will remember their sins no more." And when this sweet promise is received by faith, then follows comfort of soul; for when a gracious soul, under a sense of sin, apprehends that God is angry with him, he can have no comfort; but when he manifests his pardoning grace, then he knows that his anger is turned away, and he is comforted. God has commanded his faithful ministers to go forth with his message of mercy, in order that his people may be comforted: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warefare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned."

But God not only sends forth his gospel to his chosen ones, to open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto himself, and that they may receive the blessing of forgiveness, but that they may "receive an inheritance;" and, no doubt, heaven is all the happiness that belongs to it, and is here called an inheritance in allusion to the land of Canaan, which was the inheritance God had provided for his ancient people Israel, before they were born. Now it will be found that in many things there is an agreement between the two; for as Canaan was distributed by lot to the people of Israel, so that each had a portion, so will the Lord's people have a share and portion in heaven: "In my Father's house," said Christ, "are many mansions. I go to

prepare a place for you." As Canaan was a good land, prepared for the people of Israel before they were born, so heaven is spoken of as "that better country," and "the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world." As the people of Israel passed through the wilderness, and fought many battles before they came to the promised land, so the people of God have to pass through the wilderness of the world, which is to them no better than a wilderness, and have to "fight the good fight of faith," before they reach the promised land of everlasting rest. And as the people of Israel were introduced to Canaan, not by Moses, but by Joshua, so the saints obtain heaven as their inheritance, not by works of the law, but by Christ the Saviour, who hath said, "Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else."

Or, perhaps, heaven is spoken of as an inheritance, in allusion to what goes by that name among men; for as when children receive a portion of their father's property it is called their inheritance, so heaven is the inheritance of the children of God; and though it vastly exceeds an earthly one, because "undefiled, incorruptible, and which fadeth not away," yet it bears a resemblance in this, that it is a bequest to the children from their heavenly Father, and comes to them through the death of Christ like an earthly inheritance too; it is neither purchased nor acquired, but freely given, belongs only to the children, is the Father's free gift to them, lies among them, and will be equally possessed by them all.

And God sends forth his gospel, that the children may receive this inheritance *now*, as well as the forgiveness of their sins. Yea, the children *now* receive, by faith the inheritance, promised by him who cannot lie before the world began; and they receive the Spirit, who is the earnest or the pledge of it. Hence Paul, writing to the saints at Ephesus, says, "After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance." As an earnest is what confirms an agreement, assures a right to the thing agreed to, is a part of it, and is never returned, so the Spirit of God certifies to the saints their right to the heavenly inheritance, and gives them a meetness for it, and is the first-fruits of that glory and happiness in reserve for them, and of the same kind with it.

And how may it be known who those persons are who receive, by faith, the forgiveness of their sins and the inheritance reserved for the saints? Why, they are described as being sanctified ones, or among them that are sanctified. They are sanctified, or set apart, by God the Father, or separated from others in his divine mind in eternity; and in his good time they are sanctified inwardly by the Spirit of God, who plants principles of grace and holiness in them, which were not there before, and they become holy in their lives and conversation. This is their meetness for the undefiled inheritance; their fitness for the enjoyment of it; and this holy principle planted in them, at the time of their regeneration, is encouraged and increased by the gospel, the word of truth; for Christ has prayed that it should have this sanctifying power upon them:

“Father,” said he, “sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.”

If, then, the Lord sent Paul to preach the gospel, in order that he might open the eyes of his people, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to himself, and that they might receive, by faith, forgiveness of sins and the inheritance reserved for them, woe be to those who go forth as ministers, but who do not preach the gospel; for God is against them: “Behold, I am against them, saith the Lord, that cause my people to err by their lies, or by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord.”

A LOVER OF THE TRUTH.

A LETTER BY THE LATE JAMES KNAPP,
DEACON OF THE CHURCH AT ALVESCOTT, OXFORDSHIRE.

Highly-esteemed Friend and Brother in the Kingdom and Patience of Jesus Christ,—Your kind epistle was truly welcome to my heart, as it breathed the same desires, longings, and thirstings of soul, and wept and groaned beneath the same oppressions and sorrows that I labour under, more or less, day by day; and as it came with that witness, and kindred feeling, I fully purposed to have returned a few lines before this, but time after time I have proof upon proof that I am not my own. I purpose and resolve, but my purposes and resolves wither and decay, and I cannot carry them into effect for lack of wisdom and strength. So I prove that as there is “a time to speak and a time to keep silence,” so there is a time to write and a time to refrain therefrom, willing or unwilling.

I find there is much labour and travail in all that I put my hands unto. I find a daily scene of sorrow, vexation, and woe. Of late I have had affliction in my family, and vexations and trials in my circumstances, accompanied with such warlike feelings that I am no stranger to the prophet's declaration: “We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves.” I find I am a sorry scholar, in taking up the daily cross, denying self, &c. My needs, with a sense of helplessness, seem to grow upon me, and I weep and groan under the affliction, and at times roar in feeling by reason of the disquietude of my heart. My life sometimes becomes so bitter that, like one of old, I would fain lie down and die, to be freed from these turmoils in the wilderness. I would fain bow to the will and pleasure of the Lord in all things, and not reply against any of his dispensations, nor feel a rising murmur against any of his doings; and this desire I feel in my soul, day by day; so that “to will I find to be present with me,” yet I find also that “how to perform that which is good, I find not;” and though I know that “power belongeth unto God,” and have proved him times many a very present help in trouble, and that hitherto he has not failed me, yet I still find, when hard beset with evil, that *without his present help I must sink*; and from conflicting circumstances, at times, I am so bewil-

dered and confused that how to wait, and watch, and cast my care upon him, I know not. I seem more foolish and brutish than ever; and though I feel to want to do it more and better, yet I seem to lack more and more.

“If sometimes I strive as I mourne
My hold of the promise to keep;
The billows more fiercely return,
And plunge me again in the deep.”

Thus I go mourning and moping along, with now and then a cheering ray, a refreshing taste, a heavenly dew-drop, to enliven my hope, to encourage and refresh me, and cause me to press through the crowd that daily comes; and the grace of the Lord is so wonderful in its transforming virtue that the wilderness blossoms, the barren becomes fruitful, the weak strong, the lame leaps, the mourner rejoices, the afflicted sings, the voracious lion and bear lie down with the kid, &c., so that a child may lead them, and the beggar becomes so rich that sceptres and crowns are esteemed as gaudy toys. A little touch last evening caused my soul somewhat so to feel. These words beamed on my spirit: “He restoreth my soul.” Nothing seemed worth my thoughts, time, or attention but the Lord, what he had done, was doing, and would do. It filled my soul with such feelings as withered all earthly good. As good old Berridge says:

“The world now drops its charms,
My idols all depart;
Soon as I reach my Saviour’s arms,
I give him all my heart.”

The heavenly light reflected and showed me how afar off I had been walking; how earthly; how eagerly pursuing vain trifles; how much of my time I was beguiled and deluded by the influence of unbelief and carnality. I felt to abhor myself, and longed to live perpetually to his honour and glory. I wondered at his grace, long-suffering, and tenderness.

This precious transforming grace, how sweet to walk under its influence! How the soul delights in the Lord, and the ways of the Lord! I find then to live a little as I would.

“The beams of his grace are passing all worth,
The smiles of his face are heaven on earth;
When to me he shows them, what joy fills my breast,
And when he withholds them, ’tis all for the best.”

The Lord does all things well; and sometimes I feel the mouth of faith large enough to take in the afflictions as well as the consolations, and so welcome the will of heaven, rejoicing that I am counted worthy to suffer for his sake. And then again I feel to wither and decay. Nature is thrown into a ferment, and in feeling I seem more like a fiend than a Christian. The violence and wretchedness are better known by feeling than described. Thus I am full of inconsistency.

“Sure the plague is in my heart,
Else I could not act this part.”

Thus wrote Berridge, and so I feel. My days are made up of such

changes, and by such discipline I become spoiled for the multitude; I cannot run with the strong, nor accompany the rich, nor soar with the vain speculator; but creep with the feeble, grope with the blind, cry with the afflicted, groan with the oppressed, sigh with the needy, importune with the necessitous, and sometimes rejoice and sing with the merry-hearted. So I expect ere long to leave this cumbrous clay, and enter that inheritance where all will be love and praise.

My dear partner joins in Christian love to Mrs. K., yourself, our friends in the Oval, and all to whom we are known; and as we hope to see, if the Lord will, beloved Shorter in June, if convenient and you feel disposed, we shall be glad to see you also.

May the blessing of the Lord rest upon you and yours. This is the desire of

Yours affectionately in the Hope of the Gospel,
Clanfield, March 28th, 1850. JAMES KNAPP.

[We well knew the writer of the above letter, and, in common with all who were favoured with his acquaintance and friendship, much esteemed and loved him for the grace of God manifest in him. As deacon of a gospel church, few men were more esteemed for his singular judgment and firmness, yet quietness and meekness of spirit, especially when, under the bereavement of the pastor a weight of church affairs devolved upon his shoulders. He was a dear lover of experimental truth, and there was a sweetness and savour in his conversation which at once won the affections. He was one of those men, now alas! getting rare, in whom and through whom grace shines. His life and conduct, walk and conversation, manners and deportment, adorned the gospel; and one could scarcely be in his company five minutes without feeling an inward persuasion of his intrinsic worth as a Christian and as a man. But to show the utter dependance of the creature, and that no man should stand in his wisdom or strength, it pleased the Lord to take down his earthly tabernacle by that insidious disease, softening of the brain, which reduced in a few weeks the strong man to the weakness of a child both in body and mind. But the work of God in the soul is distinct from mental strength and mental weakness, and outlives disease and death and all natural decay, until, at the falling of the earthly tabernacle, faith is changed into sight, and hope into enjoyment.—THE EDITOR.]

THE CHANGED CROSS.

It was a time of sadness, and my heart,
Although it knew and loved the better part,
Felt wearied with the conflict and the strife,
And all the needful discipline of life.

And while I thought on these, as given to me,
My trial tests of faith and love to be,
It seem'd as if I never could be sure
That faithful to the end I should endure.

And thus, no longer trusting to his might
Who says, "We walk by faith, and not by sight,"
Doubting, and almost yielding to despair,
The thought arose, "My cross I cannot bear!

"Far heavier its weight must surely be,
Than those of others which I daily see;
O, if I might another burden choose,
Methinks I should not fear my crown to lose."

A solemn silence reign'd on all around,
E'en nature's voices utter'd not a sound;

The evening shadows seem'd of peace to tell,
And sleep upon my weary spirit fell.

A moment's pause, and then a heavenly light
Bcam'd full upon my wondering, raptur'd sight;
Angels on silvery wings seem'd everywhere,
And angels' music thrill'd the balmy air.

Then One, more fair than all the rest to see,
One, to whom all the others bow'd the knee,
Came gently to me, as I trembling lay,
And "Follow me," he said; "I am the way."

Then, speaking thus, he led me far above,
And there, beneath a canopy of love,
Crosses of divers shape and size were seen,
Larger and smaller than my own had been.

And one there was most beauteous to behold,
A little one, with jewels set in gold;
Ah, this, methought, I can with comfort wear,
For it will be an easy one to bear.*

And so the little cross I quickly took;
But all at once my frame beneath it shook;
The sparkling jewels, fair were they to see,
But far too heavy was their *weight* for me.

"This may not be," I cried, and look'd again
To see if any there could ease my pain;
But one by one I pass'd them slowly by,
Till on a lovely one I cast my eye.

Fair flowers around its sculptur'd form entwined,
And grace and beauty seem'd in it combined;
Wondering, I gazed, and still I wonder'd more,
To think so many should have pass'd it o'er.

But O! That form, so beautiful to see,
Soon made its hidden sorrows known to me;
Thorns lay beneath those flowers and colours fair;
Sorrowing, I said, "This cross I may not bear."

And so it was with each and all around,
Not one to suit my *need* could there be found;
Weeping, I laid each heavy burden down,
As my Guide gently said, "No cross, no crown."

At length to him I raised my sadden'd heart;
He knew its sorrows, bade its doubts depart.
"Be not afraid," he said, "but trust in me;
My perfect love shall now be shown to thee."

And then, with lighten'd eyes and willing feet,
Again I turn'd my earthly cross to meet;
With forward footsteps, turning not aside,
For fear some hidden evil might betide.

And there, in the prepared, appointed way,
Listening to hear, and ready to obey,
A cross I quickly found, of plainest form,
With only words of love inscribed thereon.

* This is the cross which some of our daughters of Zion so conspicuously wear, minus the jewels, imitating nuns and sisters of mercy.

With thankfulness I raised it from the rest,
 And joyfully acknowledged it the best;
 The *only* one of all the many there,
 That I could feel was *good* for me to bear.

And while I thus my chosen one confess'd,
 I saw a heavenly brightness on it rest;
 And as I bent, my burden to sustain,
 I recognised my own old cross again!

But O, how different did it seem to be,
 Now I had learn'd its preciousness to see;
 No longer could I, unbelieving, say,
 "Perhaps another is a better way."

Ah, no! Henceforth my one desire shall be;
 That he who knows me best should choose for me;
 And so, whate'er his love sees good to send,
 I'll trust it's best, because he knows the end.

A CROSS BEARER.

A DEAR DEPARTED ONE.

My dear Friends,—We are exhorted in the word of God to "remember that we magnify the Lord's work, which men behold;" (Job xxxvi. 24;) and the man after God's own heart declares to us that "the works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." (Ps. cxi. 2.) And of all his marvellous works the most wonderful appears to me to be the work of redemption, and the revelation and application of it to the souls of poor, lost, sinful men; for of all those who are born of God the apostle says, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." This was exemplified in Mary: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour," &c. (Luke i. 46, 47.) And David, under the sacred influences of the Holy Spirit, penned Psalm cxlv., in which he sweetly sets forth the same truth: "One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works. They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power."

With such precedents as these before me, I feel encouraged to present my esteemed friends with a few tokens of the Lord's sovereign goodness and mercy towards one dear to me in a double bond of union; one whose memory is blessed to me, and one, I believe, of that number of whom it is written, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." You have known my daughter, Mrs. Bell, from her youth, yet have had little opportunity of observing the work of God in its gracious operation upon her soul; but, by my near connection and communications with her, I may be able to give some brief account, which I hope will prove profitable and for the edification of your minds.

This dear departed one was from her early days under gracious tuition, and was in general very reserved in speaking of her feelings

and experience in the things of God; but as she grew up to maturity she found more freedom in communicating her mind to those she believed feared the Lord, and with whom she was well acquainted. She was swift to hear, but slow to speak, yet endowed with a clear perception and penetration respecting persons and things. Being under divine teaching, she was deeply instructed and led into the depths of human depravity, and well acquainted with the plague of her own heart. She was uniformly, after her effectual calling, of a lowly spirit, esteeming such as were Christians indeed more highly than herself; and, according to her ability, free and liberal as occasion rendered it needful. I have, in my own mind, frequently compared her to a root or tuft of violets, hid by surrounding briars, but which might be discoverable by its fragrance before it was seen.

In her younger days she had a most remarkable dream, which she rehearsed at breakfast time the next morning, of which I have still a copy. From about 10 years of age, she and her sister Hannah were my constant companions to Monkwell Street Chapel, (Mr. Huntington's,) and subsequently to Old Providence Chapel, where I believe you frequently saw her. During that period, all that appeared observable was serious attention in hearing, an orderly, becoming deportment, a dutiful obedience to her parents, &c. She was of a studious turn and given to reading, especially subjects of a religious tendency, and particularly Mr. Huntington's writings, as they came from the press at that period.

The first serious impression upon her mind that was observable was at the time the old chapel was destroyed by fire. A person who was an enemy to our fraternity came in, and, with a kind of triumph, said, "So Providence Chapel is burnt down." The sudden and unexpected tidings were a heavy shock to her mind, and were followed with the powerful application of those words: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." From that period convictions fastened upon her conscience; and as she was then under paternal care, she was observed to be gradually led into a state of soul-travail that could not be hid. She would retire, at times, by the hour together, and was generally given to reading when the avocations of domestic affairs afforded opportunity. Her elder sister, Hannah, was previously smitten with a sense of her lost state, and they then found fellowship in trouble, and afterwards experienced consolation together; and their union of soul continued steadfast unto the end, for Phebe said to me on her death-bed that she loved her sister as her own soul.

But to return. She was much affected by the decease of our ever-to-be-revered pastor and teacher, Mr. Huntington; but afterwards gathered great encouragements under the ministry of Mr. Chamberlain; once in particular, under a sermon at Deptford, while he was repeating and expatiating upon Mark ix. 14. Under the powerful application of these words, she was blessed with the comforts of hope, and she accordingly expressed her feelings in a letter to Mr. Chamberlain, to which he returned a kind and suitable answer. The copies of both letters we have now in our possession.

After this, she entered into the marriage state, and found in Mr. Bell a gracious companion and kind husband. With him she walked in union, communion, and fellowship in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, to the appointed end of her pilgrimage, in the 37th year of her age, leaving behind, in this vale of tears, us,—her sorrowing parents, an affectionate husband, and one surviving daughter, about eight years old.

Being rather of a delicate constitution, she endured various afflictions, and manifold tribulations were mingled in her lot; all of which are by divine appointment found, more or less, in the Christian's path; and in this view I consider the exhortation of Paul and Barnabas, when they visited the disciples at Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, (Acts xiv. 22,) as having a twofold meaning: "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God;" for we find, by experience, that much tribulation attends our entrance into the kingdom of grace at the first, and much tribulation, though of a different kind, must be experienced ere we enter the kingdom of glory. (Rev. vii. 14—17.)

Some time after my daughter's union with Mr. Bell, it pleased the Lord to visit her waiting soul, and to bless her with that liberty with which he makes his children free, while searching for the pearl of great price in reading Dr. Goodwin's choice treatise upon the glories of Jesus Christ, a book presented to her by a Christian friend. After having found the blessed Object of her soul's desire, she continued to walk becoming her high vocation and calling in the fear of the Lord, and frequently was blessed with the comforts of the Holy Ghost; unknown among the professors of the day, but well known to a few select ones, with whom she found fellowship in the things of God.

At the time Mr. Chamberlain was last in London, (Sept.,) she heard him the Sabbath before he returned, both morning and evening. That night she caught cold, and its effects brought on a rapid decline, which terminated in her dissolution, on the 27th of January.

After it had pleased God to visit my dear partner with a paralytic stroke, last August, I was constrained to give up my evening attendance on public worship, when I generally went to Foley Street, and then returned home. By this means I was enabled to observe both the state of my daughter's health and the frame of her mind; but after we came to reside here it was evident that she was going the way of all the earth, as in the case of your only son. She took to her bed for about 14 days, during which time I had to attend, with no small solicitude of mind, alternately upon two beloved sick ones, supplicating and watching to see the issue of this holy and all wise dispensation, being at times indulged with strong consolations intermingled with this affliction.

In conversing with me, Phebe observed, "I have long been persuaded that Mr. Chamberlain's and Mr. Beeman's ministry would do to live by, and now I know it will do to die by." She was, at times, very happy in the prospect of her dismission, and at other times much tried with temptations. Once, as I sat by her bedside,

she was speaking of Satan's temptations in the prospect of death, how it would be when she came into the swellings of Jordan, and what would she do when flesh and heart both failed. She then said, "I now feel so strengthened and established that this enemy cannot move me as heretofore." She then repeated with remarkable energy the first two verses of Hart's Hymn, page 192; and, turning to me with a smiling countenance, said, "I should like that hymn to be sung over my grave." (This was done agreeable to her request.)

This hymn is 845 in Gadsby's Selection:

"The praise of Christ, ye Christians, sound."

A certain young woman whom Mrs. Bell had occasionally employed called to see her, a few days before she departed this life. She appeared much concerned, expressed a desire to render her any service in her power, and offered to come and read to her. This Mrs. Bell declined, saying, "Ah, Mary, your books will not suit me." This poor ignorant creature then observed, "I hope you will be able to make your peace with God;" to which Mrs. Bell answered, "My peace has been made long ago." This surprised the poor woman, as she could not conceive how this could be done; when Mrs. Bell observed "that it was impossible for poor sinners to make their peace with God, it being his work alone; God, in his sovereign mercy, ordained peace for his people before the world was made. This was settled and made sure in the council of peace between God the Father and God the Son. The Son of God engaged in this council to become the Surety of all his chosen people, and in the fulness of time he came and took human nature into union with his Divine Person; and, 'being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross;' and thus made peace for his people by the blood of his cross. In the next place the Holy Spirit is given to all those chosen ones in their respective generations, to quicken them; for they, like all others, are dead in trespasses and sins. He also opens their blind eyes to see their lost and undone condition, and, as the Spirit of grace and supplication, teaches and helps them to pray, to watch, and to wait for the pardon of their sins and for every promised blessing; and when the set time is come, they are brought savingly and experimentally to feel that their sins are pardoned through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus are brought into a state of pardon and peace, through the obedience and righteousness of God's dear Son; all which they are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls. If you, Mary, have nothing but a peace of your own making, it will be of no avail on a dying bed." This poor young woman was struck with astonishment, saying she never heard such things before, and went weeping away. Mrs. Bell observed to me that she found liberty given her to speak freely to her, and hoped it might be for her good.

A few days previous to her departure, when conversing with her husband upon her present state of mind and experience, she said to him, "The Lord is indeed the Father of all mercies; and as a tender

Father he now deals with me in gently taking down my frail tabernacle, and in giving me an assured confidence of my interest in his beloved Son as my God and Saviour. The Holy Spirit at times comforts my feeble soul with his blessed consolations, and I now feel solid peace, and supporting strength equal unto my day."

At another time, after a weary night, being in the morning relieved from pain, she sang out the whole six verses of the hymn:

"O happy saints, who dwell in light,
And walk with Jesus clothed in white."

The nurse that attended her (not being in the secret) was so struck with the words and the energy with which my daughter sang them, that she requested me to write a copy for her, saying she would keep them as long as she lived.

About 9 o'clock in the morning of the day of her departure, she said to the nurse, "You are not going with me." The woman replied, "If I am not to go with you, what must I do then?" Mrs. Bell said, "Leave the room and shut the door; I want to be alone." This was done, and no one entered the chamber for nearly half an hour. After this, at a quarter before 12 at noon, she fell asleep in Jesus; and so imperceptible was her peaceful departure that we who stood round the bed had no intimation of it till we found the pulse had ceased to beat.

Thus I have endeavoured to give you a brief though imperfect account of the blessed end of one dear to me, and not unknown to you.

May the good Lord be pleased to make it a speaking providence to us that yet survive; and, under the gracious teachings and influences of the Holy Spirit, may we be enabled to "give diligence to make our calling and election sure," that when the messenger of death shall come, we may be found with our loins girt, and our lamps burning; that when the Lord shall appear, "we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."

I hope you will excuse every imperfection in this, as I have many interruptions; and, being written chiefly by candle-light, it may be difficult to read.

I am but poorly in health. My wife continues very feeble and weak, but at times is cheerful and thankful in the midst of her infirmities.

I remain, dear Friends,

Your obliged and affectionate old Companion,

No. 12, Foley-street, Marylebone,
Feb. 25th, 1832.

J. KEYT.

SPIRITUAL convictions come upon the conscience with such pinching dilemmas, and tilt the sword of conviction so deep into their souls, that there is no staunching of the blood, no healing this wound, till Christ himself comes and undertakes the cure. This barbed arrow cannot be pulled out of their hearts by any but the hand that shot it in. Discourse with such a soul about his troubles, and he will tell you that all the sorrows that ever he had in the world, loss of estate, health, children, or whatever else, are but flea-bites to this; this swalloweth up all other troubles.—*Flavel*.

MEDITATIONS ON VARIOUS IMPORTANT POINTS OF OUR MOST HOLY FAITH.

I.

THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL.

(Continued from page 128.)

As the Ministry of the Gospel is, as we have already shown, an ordinance peculiar to the New Testament, it is very evident that unless we have clear views of the grand points of difference which distinguish the two Covenants, the Old and the New, from each other, we shall have but dim, confused conceptions of its true nature and character; and may thus run great risk either of misunderstanding it through ignorance, or legalising it through self-righteousness. But to obtain these clear views, two things are needful: 1. An experience of these two covenants in our own breast, that by feelingly and experimentally knowing both law and gospel in their separate spirit and power, we may discriminate between the two with all that peculiar keenness and nicety of insight into their distinctive character which nothing but such a personal, living acquaintance with each of them can produce; and, 2. An understanding heart in the word of God, that we may see clearly traced by the pen of the Holy Ghost in the Scripture what we have felt and known of these two covenants in our own soul. These two things mutually help each other. If there be no light within, there will be no light without; where there is a veil upon the heart, there will be a veil upon the word, as the apostle speaks in the chapter we are now considering. (2 Cor. iii. 14, 15.) Similarly, the same blessed Spirit, when he takes away the veil from off the heart, takes away the veil from off the word; and as what he writes in the heart (Jer. xxxi. 33) is in harmony with what he has written in the word, the two correspond, like the wax to the seal, or the coin to the die. In the mouth of these two witnesses every truth becomes established; and the more closely and fitly that they agree, the greater is the strength of their united testimony. In proportion, then, as we are so led and favoured, we move on safe ground; and as the word of truth is thus made a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path, under its guidance we step firmly and boldly forward, with an enlightened understanding, an established judgment, a willing mind, and an approving conscience. It is in this way and in this spirit that we commenced, and, with the Lord's help and blessing, hope to pursue to the end the subject of our present Meditations.

Our readers will doubtless remember that the part of our subject which we are now considering is to show the nature and character of the ministry of the gospel; and that taking for our text 2 Cor. iii. we are opening the leading points of difference between the two dispensations—the law and the gospel. Some of these distinctive points of difference we have already considered, and need not refer to them. The point at which we abruptly broke off in our last No. was to show that among the other distinctive differences between the law and the gospel, as traced out by the apostle, one

was that the law was a *veiled* dispensation, whereas the gospel is an *unveiled* one.

5. Here, then, we resume our subject; and to lay down this point of distinction more clearly, we shall quote the words of the apostle which we shall endeavour to open: "Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech; and not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished; but their minds were blinded; for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart." (2 Cor. iii. 12-15.)

If the chapter from which these words are quoted be carefully read, it will be plainly seen that the chief line and main force of the argument pursued therein are based upon this ground that, whilst each dispensation had a glory of its own, the glory of the gospel far outshone the glory of the law. But the question would naturally arise: "How do you prove the distinctive glory of these two dispensations; and what authority have you for your assertion that the glory of the former exceeds the glory of the latter?" "How," it might also be asked, "was the glory of the old dispensation visibly manifested?" To this last question the apostle would answer, By the shining of the face of Moses, which was a reflection of the glory of God seen by him on Sinai's top. This shining of the face of Moses was, therefore, to the children of Israel a visible symbol that he had conversed with God, and as the typical mediator of that dispensation had brought down that glory with him. It was thus made plainly evident that there was a glory in that dispensation, if its very reflected image shone so brightly in the face of its typical mediator before assembled Israel.

But now comes that peculiar transaction on which the apostle lays so much stress, and on which he bases such a remarkable development of heavenly truth. Moses put a veil over his face. This the apostle explains to have been a symbolical act,* and that it represented that the dispensation of which he was the typical mediator was a veiled dispensation; whereas the gospel is an unveiled one.

This veil symbolised, according to the apostle, two things: 1. The veil over the dispensation itself. 2. The veil over the hearts of the children of Israel. Now the effect of these two concurring circumstances was that "they could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished;" that is, Christ, who is "the end of the law." It

* It is beautiful to see how the Holy Ghost, in the New Testament, explains and interprets words and actions recorded in the Old, of which we should have either taken no notice at all or misunderstood their significance. Take, for instance, the case of Melchisedec, as brought together and connected by Gen. xiv. 18-20 and Ps. cx. 4; and then read the rich interpretation given by the Holy Ghost, Heb. vii. Who of us would have seen in Melchisedec such a typical representation of Christ as our great High Priest? And yet, as thus opened up by the apostle, what force and beauty are seen in it. So of the shining of the face of Moses, and the veil with which he covered his face. Who would have seen in these two things what Paul has brought out of them 2 Cor. iii. ?

would take us too far from our present subject to dwell upon these points at any length; but we shall require a little space clearly to lay open the distinctive character of the ministry of the gospel as an unveiled dispensation, for it is a point of great importance in showing its true nature and character.

All under the law was veiled. The ark of the covenant, where God dwelt between the cherubim, and which was the peculiar symbol of his visible presence, was hidden by a veil. All the Levitical rites, ceremonies, and sacrifices were representations of "good things to come;" (Heb. ix. 11;) that is, of Christ and the blessings and benefits that were to come through him; but they were veiled, partly by their own shadowy nature, (Heb. x. 1,) and partly by the ignorance and unbelief of Israel, to whom they were given. But Christ being now come "a High Priest of good things to come," and having put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, the veil between God and us is rent in twain from the top to the bottom, as the veil of the temple was when he yielded up the ghost, laying down, by a voluntary act, the life which he had taken. (Matt. xxvii. 50, 51; John x. 17, 18.) He has thus consecrated for us a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh, that we may have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. (Heb. ix. 11, 12, 26; x. 19, 20.) Thus the veil was actually taken away by the sacrifice and bloodshedding of Jesus on the cross. But there is the veil also upon the heart. This, too, must be taken away. But how? By "the Lord the Spirit," as the apostle so clearly speaks: "Nevertheless, when it," that is, Israel, "shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit," or rather, "*the Spirit*," that is, the Holy Spirit, by whom it is taken away. We thus see that one grand distinctive feature of the glory of the gospel is the removal of the veil: 1. Its actual removal from the face of God by the sacrifice, bloodshedding, and death of his dear Son; and 2. Its removal from the face of our heart by the Lord the Spirit taking it away by an inward revelation of Christ.

Now what follows from this removal of the veil, both actually and experimentally? Two things. One known only to ourselves, the other known and seen by others. 1. The one known to ourselves is thus unfolded by the apostle: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. iii. 18.) The word "open" should have been translated, as it is in the original, "unveiled," for by the present rendering much of the force and beauty of the apostle's words is lost. "But we all," that is, all we who believe, "with unveiled face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image." We, he would say, are not like Israel after the flesh, whose minds are blinded; the same veil remaining untaken away which now hides from them the glory of Christ, as the veil of old hid the glory of the face of Moses. This veil was actually done away in Christ, and this veil has been experimentally taken off our heart by the Spirit; and the blessed fruit and consequence of this removal is that we see as

in a glass the glory of the Lord, and are thereby changed into the image of Christ, and reflect his glory, as the face of Moses was changed to reflect the glory of God. But what is this glass? The gospel, which is a reflection of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and is therefore called "the glorious gospel of Christ." (2 Cor. iv. 4.)

Now from this beholding with unveiled face as in a glass the glory of the Lord, there follow certain important fruits and consequences, all which determine the nature and character of the ministry of the gospel.

i. There is a being "changed into the same image." This is in analogy with the shining of the face of Moses. By looking on God, he caught the reflection of his glory. His very face was changed thereby, and a conformity wrought in it to the glory which he saw in his communion with God. So by beholding the glory of Christ, as shining forth in the gospel, there is a being changed into the same image—an internal reflection of his glory, a being "transformed in the renewing of the mind;" (Rom. xii. 2;) "a putting on of the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him who created him;" (Col. iii. 10;) a putting on of Christ, as having been baptized into Christ; (Gal. iii. 27;) a forming of Christ in the heart; (Gal. iv. 19;) yea, Christ himself in it the hope of glory. (Col. i. 27.) And all this from glory to glory—each successive view of the glory of Christ in the gospel producing a corresponding glory in the soul; but all "by the Spirit of the Lord."

Now from this internal experimental renewing in the spirit of the mind, certain fruits spring, certain consequences flow.

1. A renouncing of the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness. (2 Cor. iv. 2.) An unveiled gospel is utterly opposed to dishonesty and craft; and a heart from which the veil has been taken away will not allow the mouth to speak, or the feet to walk in such accursed ways of hypocrisy and deceit. But whilst the veil is on the heart there is a veil on the gospel; and what is the consequence of this double veil? What we see all round us—universal dishonesty and craft in men who call themselves ministers of Christ, so that we can scarcely find anywhere a truly honest man; that is, one honest to God, honest to himself, and honest to the souls of men.

2. Another fruit of this removal of the veil is "not handling the word of God deceitfully." (2 Cor. iv. 2.) All ministers fly to the word of God, and try to prove their views and doctrines from that infallible source of truth; as they well know that by that unerring standard every doctrine must be tried. But some through ignorance, and others through wilfulness, handle it deceitfully. Not beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and not being changed into the same image, they have no internal perception of the glory that shines forth in the gospel as a revelation of the wisdom, grace, and love of God, and therefore they cannot understand its spiritual meaning. Not seeing the glory of Christ as its central sun, through the veil of ignorance and unbelief being on their mind, they must needs, as the

apostle speaks elsewhere, "corrupt* the word of God." (2 Cor. ii. 17.) Now whether this corrupting and adulterating of the word of God be done through a spirit of wilful enmity, love of filthy lucre, ambition, thirst for human applause, or spring from mental darkness, ignorance, and unbelief, the result, if not the sin, is the same—a poisoning of the wells of truth. But the servant of Christ, first from divine light, God having shone into his heart to give him the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ; (2 Cor. iv. 6;) and, secondly, from divine life, producing and maintaining the fear of God in his breast, cannot handle the word of God deceitfully, or corrupt and adulterate it. In his view and feelings, to handle the word of God deceitfully is one of the worst of sins,—as gross, as grievous spiritually as for a servant to embezzle his master's goods, a steward to falsify his employer's accounts, a trustee to defraud the widow and the orphan of property entrusted to him on their behalf; nay, in some respects worse, inasmuch as God is greater than man, the soul than the body, and eternity than time. The honour of God, the witness of conscience, the blood of souls, the joys of heaven, the horrors of hell, all, all as with one voice testify against a dishonest minister and a dishonest ministry. How can he then handle the word of God deceitfully?

3. From this internal work and witness, testifying against all deceit and dishonesty, springs another fruit—"great plainness, or 'boldness' (margin) of speech." (2 Cor. iii. 12.) If we carefully read the context, we shall see how the apostle contrasts this great plainness, or boldness of speech, with the veil over the face of Moses: "Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech; and not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished." (2 Cor. iii. 12, 13.) "And not as Moses." Why not? Because *that* was a veiled dispensation; and there was, therefore, a veil on the tongue, as a part of the face. The types and figures, rites, ceremonies, and sacrifices of that dispensation spoke as with a veiled voice; therefore obscurely, not plainly; timidly, not boldly. But the gospel is an unveiled dispensation. The veil taken off the face removes the muffle from the tongue,† and the servant of Christ speaks plainly. His speech and his preaching, like Paul's, are "not with enticing words of man's wisdom," wrapped up in, and obscured by high-flown expressions and flowery language, but "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power;" not "in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual." (1 Cor. ii. 4, 13.) They are thus the "words of the wise, which are as goads" to urge on and stimulate the sluggish soul, and "as nails fastened in

* The word "corrupt" means literally, deal with it as dishonest sellers of wine do with their wines; that is, adulterate it with water or with drugs, as our modern publicans do their beer and liquors.

† The veil worn in Eastern climates is not such an apology for a veil as our English ladies wear, but a thick covering, completely hiding the features and muffling the voice.

the heart by the masters of assemblies, as given them from one Shepherd." (Eccl. xii. 11.) And as they use great "plainness," so do they use great "boldness" of speech, (margin.) There was, in a certain sense, a timidity under the law. The law, indeed, itself, did not speak timidly, for it spoke with thunders and lightnings, and the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud; but it produced timidity in those who heard it. It gendered to bondage. (Gal. iv. 24.) Only once a year, and then not without blood, could the high priest enter into the holiest place. (Heb. ix. 7.) When given on Mount Sinai, bounds were set unto the people round about, and a caution given, "Take heed to yourselves that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it." When on the third day there were thunders and lightnings, a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, all the people that were in the camp trembled; and, as recorded by the apostle, "so terrible was the sight that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake." (Exod. xix. 16; Heb. xii. 21.) Its spirit was "the spirit of bondage to fear;" (Rom. viii. 15;) and its ministration, therefore, not only at first was in the same spirit, but this spirit of fear and bondage was ever kept up by displays of the justice and wrath of God against sin and disobedience, both in the wilderness and all through the history of that dispensation. But the gospel is a revelation of the full forgiveness of sins through the blood of the Lamb; a proclamation of mercy for the vilest and worst of transgressors; a message of reconciliation to enemies and aliens by wicked works; a declaration of free, sovereign, and superabounding grace, which, in its swelling tide, rises high above, and covers all the aboundings of sin of every name, shape, hue, and magnitude. As then, this precious gospel is believed and received into the heart, it imparts and inspires a holy boldness, a gracious confidence, which manifests itself inwardly in the approaches of the soul to God, (Eph. iii. 12; Heb. iv. 16; x. 19, 22,) and, outwardly, by a bold, outspoken testimony. With what boldness did Peter and John speak, so that the rulers of the people and the elders of Israel marvelled at it. Nothing daunted by all their threatenings, how they and their fellow worshippers prayed that "with all boldness they might speak the word of God;" and how, in immediate answer to prayer, "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake the word of God with boldness." (Acts iv. 13, 29, 31.) So, no sooner was Christ revealed to the soul of Paul as the Son of God, than "he preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus." (Acts ix. 27.) A timid ministry is not the ministry of the gospel. Carnal boldness, presumptuous confidence, daring language, are, indeed, as foreign to its character and spirit, as sneaking cowardice or timid unfaithfulness; but a gracious, holy boldness, a fearless disregard of smiles or frowns, character or consequences, opposition or approbation, pay or popularity, will always distinguish the servant of Christ from the common herd of self-seeking, men-pleasing ministers. (Gal. 1. 10; 1 Thess. ii. 4-6.)

4. But there is another fruit of beholding with unveiled face as in a glass the glory of the Lord; there is a being "*changed into the same*

image." Those whom God "did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son," (Rom. viii. 29,) his suffering image here, his glorified image hereafter. It is of the first image of Christ, his image when here below, into which an unveiled view of his glory changes the believing soul. In the gospel, as in a glass, is seen the image of Christ as he appeared in the flesh. His dying, bleeding love; his pity and compassion to the children of men; his meekness and lowliness; his gentleness and calmness, for he neither strived, nor cried, nor did any man hear his voice in the street; his holy wisdom; the warmth of his zeal, yet the tenderness of his heart; his submission to the will of God in all things; his forbearance with his disciples; his endurance of the contradiction of sinners against himself; his condescension to all, his denial of help to none; his holiness without asceticism, and separation from the world without seclusion; his faithfulness without anger, and rebukes without bitterness; these, and other features of the image of Christ as beheld in the gospel, are, as it were, copied in the heart, and manifested by the words and actions of his servants. Has he not left us an example that we should follow his steps? (1 Pet. ii. 21;) and do we not read: "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked?" (1 John ii. 6.) Not that anyone of his followers, whether private Christians or public ministers, can be so conformed to the image of Christ inwardly, or so reflect it outwardly as fully to carry out the words of the apostle. But the Lord Jesus is the pattern set before us, which is to be looked at and into, as beaming, to a spiritual eye, with ineffable grace and glory. Nor let any one think that this can be effected by any will or wish, strength, or wisdom of our own. This is far out of the sight of human eye, far beyond the reach of human hand. It is the especial work of the Holy Ghost to impress this image of Christ upon the heart; for the apostle adds, "Even as by the Spirit of the Lord." It is he who takes the veil off the heart; it is he who reveals Christ to the soul; it is he who manifests his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; (John i. 14;) it is he who takes of the things of Christ, and shows them to his disciples; (John xvi. 15;) who testifies of him to them, and glorifies him in them; (John xv. 26; xvi. 14.) This possession of the Spirit of Christ, this conformity to the image of Christ, this knowledge of the mind of Christ, (1 Cor. ii. 16,) this walking after the example of Christ will always distinguish the servant of Christ from all others. It is true, lamentably and painfully true, that there is not one of them who does not fall short, wofully short, of this inward and outward image of Christ. But there are some faint glimmerings of this image in all his true servants; for why do we love them, respect them, receive them, or hear them? Is it not for the resemblance that they bear to their Lord, from the knowledge that they have of him, from his gracious words that they speak, and from his Spirit which they manifest? What other claim have they upon our notice or attention? The image of Christ which we see in their words, in their spirit, in their actions,

may be very weak, and, as it were, broken, like the image of the sun in ruffled water, but it is *there*, or we have no warrant to receive them as his servants: for “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his;” (Rom. viii. 9;) and if there come any unto us and bring not the doctrine of Christ, to know and abide in which is to have both the Father and the Son, we are not to receive him into our house, or bid him God speed. (2 John 9, 10.) This may seem hard doctrine, and to draw a very narrow line; but the question is, Is it scriptural truth? Is it according to the unerring standard of the word of God? And must we lower that standard because so few can come up to it, and, if rigidly adhered to, it seems to cut off so many from being true ministers of Christ? Every point that we have advanced, every step that we have taken, has been rigidly after the word of truth. We well knew when we undertook the task that our views would appear rigid, narrow, and exclusive; and simply for this reason, because they would strip so many of their claims and pretensions to be counted servants of God. But what other standard can we take than the word of God? And if we take that, we must take it in its purity, lest we do the very thing which we have been condemning—“corrupt the word of God,” adulterate it either by lowering and watering away all its spirit and strength, or by drugging it with stupefying ingredients to please the palate and benumb the brain. If a man bring with him neither the doctrine of Christ in his mouth, nor the Spirit of Christ in his heart, nor the example of Christ in his life, will any one kindly tell us what claim he has on our ears, our respect, or our affections? The question is not whether we are cutting off this or that minister, but whether our standard of receiving any man whatever as a servant of Christ shall be the word of God or the word of man. For, be it observed, we have not set up a high standard. We have said nothing about a man's depth of experience, clearness of call to the work, ability in it, or blessing upon it. All we have done or wish to do is to set up a true standard, or rather to point out, from the word of God, the true nature and character of the ministry of the gospel; and upon this ground to urge that, unless a man come to us with those marks, be they strongly or faintly stamped upon him, we are not called upon to receive him as a servant of Christ.

But it may be said, “Yes, we fully agree with you that the word of God must be our only standard; nor do we object to the chapter which you have taken to show from it the nature and character of the ministry of the gospel. But are we bound to take *your* exposition of it? You have laboured hard to impress *your* views upon us; but we are not tied to your views or anybody else's. Do allow us to have an opinion and a judgment of our own.” Unquestionably; we give as well as claim the right of private judgment. To refuse this is the very essence of Popery, and foreign alike to our intentions and spirit. We want no one to call us master, or believe anything because *we* believe or assert it. All that we can do, or wish to do, is to bring forward and open to the best of our ability the word of God. In reading the writings of good men, we have felt that we

can receive nothing from them but what they show from the word of truth. Let us be read and judged by the same rule. Compare all that we advance with the Scriptures. Then let our views be received or rejected as each man's own judgment or conscience may approve or condemn.

The two remaining points of the apostle's comparison between the two dispensations we shall handle with great brevity, as they are, in fact, involved in that point of contrast which has formed the subject of our present article. These are, the one, that the law is done away, but the gospel abideth; and the other, that the law leaves the hearer dead in his sins, whilst the gospel leads him on, step by step, from glory to glory.

6. The passing away of the old dispensation is a remarkable feature of its character. Whatever glory, therefore, it might have, it was transient and transitory. This the apostle clearly states: "For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." (2 Cor. iii. 10, 11.) It is "done away." It was symbolised when first given by a tent or tabernacle, as an emblem that it was not to be of stable endurance. It became in course of time old and worn out; not in itself, for, like its typical Mediator, as a revelation of the justice and anger of God against sin, its eye never becomes dim, nor its natural force abated; (Deut. xxxiv. 7;) but "weak through the flesh," (Rom. viii. 3,) that is, of those to whom it was given. Therefore, as decaying and waxing old, when it had accomplished its purpose, and the Son of God had fulfilled it, it vanished away. (Heb. viii. 13.) But the gospel abideth, and will abide to the end of the world. To mix, then, law and gospel, is to mix the decrepitude of old age with the vigour of ever-blooming youth, death with life, flesh with spirit, and beggarly elements with the Person and work of the Son of God. We cannot now enter fully on this point, but it is of vital importance, especially at this present time, when Popery, which is but a resuscitation of the old Levitical dispensation, in its priests, its sacrifice of the mass, its forms, vestments, and ceremonies, is knocking hard for admission into our high places.

7. Equally brief must we be on the last point of contrast, the leading on "from glory to glory." This is intimated by the words, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. iii. 18.) The words "from glory to glory" may mean either from one glory of Christ seen in him to a corresponding glory reflected in the soul, or from one degree of grace in the heart to another degree of grace. As both these interpretations are admissible, and indeed combine and coalesce in one, we shall take them both.

We have already shown that a view of the glory of Christ in the glass of the gospel has a transforming efficacy. There is indeed no other way of an inward conformity to his image. But he is so supremely, so ineffably and infinitely glorious, that only a few beams

and rays of his glory strike the eye when the Spirit takes off the veil and manifests him to the heart. Yet each ray has a penetrating, enlightening, and transforming efficacy. Now the more that the glorious gospel is looked into, and the more that the glory of Christ is seen in it, the more there will be of this transforming by the renewing of the mind. (Rom. xii. 2; Eph. iv. 23, 24; Col. iii. 10.) For the most part we learn the knowledge of Christ by degrees; and usually by slow degrees, for we are dull scholars, needing line upon line; and after all it is but here a little and there a little that we do know after many years of school discipline. (Isa. xxviii. 10.) But there is this peculiar feature in the gospel, as distinct from the law, that the more the law is looked into, the darker is the mind, the heavier the bondage, the more confused the thoughts, the stronger the corruptions of the flesh. You may look at and into the law till you sink into black despair; and the deeper you sink, the more will it press you down. But the more you look at and into the gospel, and the more that the Person and work, blood and righteousness, grace and glory of the Lord Jesus are seen in it, the more light you will have in your mind, the more life in your soul, the more stability in your thoughts, the more peace in your conscience, and the more love in your affections.

But it is time for us to pause, though the subject would invite us on till we knew not where to stop. In our next No. we shall hope to gather up our threads, and complete our sketch of the nature and character of the ministry of the gospel.

I HAVE tasted Canaan's grapes,
 And soon shall die to go
 Where my Lord the vineyard keeps,
 And where the clusters grow.
 There, on new and living wine,
 I shall with saints and angels feast;
 Banquet on the joys divine,
 And be my Saviour's guest.
 Now I stand through Sovereign grace,
 In linen white and clean;
 Wear Immanuel's righteousness,
 Which covers all my sin.
 Yet, though fully justified,
 I long to join the courts above,
 Where the sight of him that died
 Shall perfect me in love.

—*Toplady.*

As the fall was a perfect fall, so the recovery (to the remnant recovered) is a perfect recovery, completed fully in God's decree before the world was, (Eph. i. 4,) and actually effected by Christ's suffering, (Col. ii. 14,) which becomes applicable to every individual person of that number by the Spirit of faith and holiness, and whereby they are fully and really freed from the matter of guilt through union with Christ; albeit the afflicting sense and fear of guilt appear, many times, through the weakness of faith in that union; and through the encumbering defilement of sin, in them who are redeemed, holds on a conflict in the flesh till the last enemy, viz., death, be destroyed.—*Dornay.*

JUNE 1, 1866.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JUNE, 1866.

MATT. V. 6; 2 TIM. I. 9; ROM. XI. 7; ACTS VIII. 37, 38; MATT. XXVIII. 19.

● A BLESSED EXHORTATION.

“ Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.”—SONG ii. 10.

GOD’S people, for the most part, know what it is to be cast down in a low place; but the word of God declares, when men are cast down, then there are liftings up, and he will save the humble person; and Bunyan says:

“ He that is down needs fear no fall;
He that is low no pride;
He that is humble ever shall
Have God to be his guide.”

There are many encouraging words in God’s book for those who are cast down. David said, “ I was brought low, and he helped me;” and Jeremiah said, “ I cried unto thee out of the low dungeon.” Then he was very low, was he not? But did God leave him there? O dear, no; for he tells us the Lord drew near unto him, and told him not to fear. Thus you see God helped him; and so he will thee, poor child of God, though thou art in a low place; for underneath thee are the everlasting arms. No child of God can ever sink so low that his Lord’s arms cannot bring him up again; and he will say unto such, again and again: “ Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.”

My soul, at times, has sunk so low that I have feared I should never rise again; but the Lord has been pleased to speak to me again, and cheered me to hold on my way. Not long ago, I was in a very low place, and feared that I should rise no more. I feared that all I had passed through was a delusion. I feared my beginning was not right; and I knew if that was wrong all would be wrong. But the Lord was kindly pleased to bless these words to my soul with divine power: “ Thy testimonies are very sure;” and such light and power shone through the words into my soul, and I had such a blessed rising up again, that I was like a hind let loose. God gave me to see and feel that the words he had spoken to me were so sure that heaven and earth must pass away before that word could fail or come to nought; and though, through unbelief, I had been doubting, yet he abideth faithful. He gave me again such a faith’s view of Calvary, when the dear dying Lamb cried out, “ It is finished !” salvation’s work is now complete ! that I saw again my

name in that blessed will, or testimony, and that nothing could ever erase it; for the testimony was sealed by the blood of Jesus, equal and co-eternal with the Father.

But to pass on. The Lord does not at all times favour his people with a sweet and manifest deliverance in a week, a month, or year; for oftentimes they wait for years; but he encourages them in their low places until he is pleased to bring them up by a revelation of Christ and their interest in him. This may not be for years. But did any wait in vain? Did not Simeon and Hannah obtain that that they waited for? And how kind is the Lord to his waiting people! When they are cast down, and fear they shall never obtain their heart's desire, then he is gracious unto them, and says, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel. I will help thee; yea, I will strengthen thee; yea, I will uphold thee by the right hand of my righteousness." So you see how kind God is to his people. Sometimes he lets a little light shine into the heart; and this is so sweet that the poor soul is raised up to hope that God will one day speak pardon and peace to him. This encourages him to hold on his way; and the poor soul says, "O that I could believe that I was one of God's fair ones, I would not mind waiting for him; but how am I to know I am one?" I will tell thee, poor soul. Is there in thy heart a real desire, so that thou feelest thou couldst give up everything to know him for thyself? Dost thou seek him sorrowing? And when thou art in the midst of thy labour, or whatever thou mayest be engaged in, or amongst thy labouring companions, dost thou cast thy eyes upwards and, with many a sigh, say as Job did, "O that I knew where I might find him?" Or, as in the hymn:

"O that I knew the sacred place
Where I might find the Lord?"

Or didst thou ever go away by thyself, and cast thyself upon the ground and weep after the Lord until thy very breast bone ached? God will not deceive such; for he hath said, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall,"—mark that, "*shall* be filled." And if this is not hungering and thirsting, then tell me what is.

But there are many who seem to have a desire, and yet can mix up with the world and professors. Now, are the world and the things of the world a burden to thee? Dost thou meet with opposition from the world, and hast thou been enabled, by God's grace, so to walk that the world has taken knowledge of thee that thou hast been with Jesus, yet hates thee and persecutes thee on account of it? And hast thou met with sneers and jeers from the world, because thou wouldest not, for conscience sake, join in with them and do as they do? If so, cheer up, poor soul, and rejoice, for your name is written in heaven. If thou wert of the world, the world would love thee; but because thou art not of the world, but art chosen out of the world, therefore the world hateth thee. Hast thou given up thy worldly companions, the beer-house and such like, yea, and false professors, never to assemble with them again? This thou must do before thou canst be called God's fair one in the text; yea,

and it must be from an honest principle implanted in thy heart, not for worldly advantage; for God looketh at the heart.

I knew a man who seemed to be under concern of soul, and even wept and said he had a desire to sit under the truth, but had no clothes fit to be seen. I could not help feeling for him, knowing what it is to have a real desire, and yet so poor I could scarce get clothes to appear respectable in; so I let him have some clothes; but I have never yet seen him at the house of God, but have heard of the awful life that he lives. O how many there are that take up a profession for gain! but when God takes up a poor sinner, he is willing to part with all for Christ's sake. This is just the difference. I have known some who have sat under the truth, and when the minister has concluded have gone up to him, shaken hands with him heartily, and said, "I don't mind how soon you come amongst us again;" yet perhaps the next Sabbath have gone and sat under an Arminian. How can such be called the fair one in the text? You would not call a person fair who had got black spots about him. So spiritually. If thou canst sometimes go and hear error and sometimes go and profess to hear and love the truth, thou art not the fair one in the text. If you had ever been brought off from dead works to serve the living God, you could not again and again go to hear such rubbish. God hath said, "Them that honour me I will honour." And can this be honouring him? Just look at the young man whose eyes Christ opened. How decided he was, and how he was hated on account of it. There are thousands in the present day who go to hear the truth, but that truth never made them decided for truth. They halt, as it were, between two opinions; for they will hold with them that preach error; and thus they go along without opposition. But let the truth and grace of God take hold of a man, that will teach him to hate every false way, and cause him to stand to it. He will have many that will rise up against him, speak evil of him, do him all the harm they can, and cast his soul down; but God will come to him and say to him, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." Come away from them; come into my sweet embrace. I will not leave thee. I will be as the shadow of a great rock unto thee. I am thy shield to defend thee from all that men may try to do unto thee. I am thy reward too; and a full reward shall be given unto thee. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

But I will not take up the time any longer by way of introduction; but, as the Lord shall enable me, take up the words and speak from them:

I. Try to show the *features* of this fair one.

II. Try to show what she is exhorted to *come away from*.

III. The *end and design* God has in view in thus teaching her, namely, to make her sick of all things here, and fond of him.

I. God has used many metaphors in his word to set forth this fair one. He has compared her to *sheep*. Now, what is there so harmless and timid as sheep? The least thing will put them in fear, if it be only the rustling of a leaf. So are God's fair ones oftentimes in

fear where there is no real cause for fear. These poor things are brought down so low that the least thing will make them tremble.

Again. Sheep are exposed to many enemies; and as they are defenceless creatures, they need the care of the shepherd to be continually over them. So it is with this fair one; and she is made sensible of it too, and begs of God to hold her up, and then she will be safe.

Again. Sheep are prone to wander from the pastures, let them be ever so good. So with this fair one. God complained of ancient Israel, and said, "They have forsaken me, the Fountain of living waters;" and will not this apply to us? How often do his people forsake him; nor would they ever return, but God has many ways by which he calls to her, saying, "Return, return." And at length, being made sensible where she is, she cries out, "Draw me; I will run after thee."

" Prone to wander; Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it,
Seal it from thy courts above."

Sometimes sheep, and especially young ones, have a fall into the ditch; and how uncomfortable they are; nor can they be happy till the dirt is washed away from them. So with God's fair ones. They often bring guilt upon their consciences without going into open sin in the world. Their sinful thoughts often bring guilt upon their hearts, until their own clothes abhor them; and they can say with David, "I hate vain thoughts; but thy law do I love;" that perfect law of liberty which Paul speaks of.

But again. God has compared this fair one to a *dove*. Now let us look at the dove; and depend upon it if we are the fair ones in the text, there will be some resemblance to the dove in us. The dove is harmless. Hence Christ says, "Be ye, therefore, wise as serpents and harmless as doves." And is there not a new nature implanted in this fair one that is harmless as the dove? Would that new nature injure any one? Does it not rather suffer itself to be ill-treated? I have sometimes felt that spirit of "eye for eye and tooth for tooth" rise up in me; but grace has taught me to lay it aside, and pray for my greatest enemies; and when I have seen them in distress, to help them according to the ability God has given me; and I have said I had not an external enemy upon earth, in the strictest sense, since God was my great and enduring Friend.

Again. The dove, when absent from its partner, sits solitary and mourns. So God's fair ones often mourn his absence. And O how wretched till he return! Their language is, "Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? Tell me, even *me*, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon; for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?"

The dove is an enemy to carrion. It must have the pure grain to feed upon. So with God's fair ones. They must have clean provender. They cannot go into the parish church, where free-will and

human merit are set down for godliness. Nor can they feed upon dry doctrines. There are many who feed upon doctrines, or are satisfied with doctrines, without a living experience of these doctrines in their hearts; but these fair ones can say with Mr. Hart:

“ Though God's election is a truth,
 Small comfort there I see,
 Till I am told, by God's own mouth,
 That he has chosen me.”

Then it is that the Author of these doctrines becomes all in all to them. Nor can they feed upon precept alone. How many there are in the present day who can rest satisfied because they have been baptized and have sat down at the Lord's table, and so think they have done their duty. But not so with this fair one; for although she is found in these things, yet they are only the shell; and O how she pants for the kernel! And this is her prayer while going to the house of God oftentimes: “ Lord, shine through thy word, through thy ordinance, to my soul. I cannot be satisfied with the form or sign. My soul wants the substance.”

Again. This fair one is compared to a *branch*; as it is written: “ I am the vine, ye are the branches. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.” O what purging we need to make us bring forth fruit to his praise! Sometimes the Lord sends affliction into the family. Then the poor soul is brought to cry earnestly to the Lord to appear: “ Do, Lord, appear for me. I am in distress and trouble; and thou hast said, ‘ Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.’ I know thou hast in faithfulness afflicted me. I deserve it; and if thou shouldst leave my soul to starve, I deserve it; but do remember I am but dust.” Thus they bring forth fruit; and it is by these things men live. God's fair ones would get into a cold, lukewarm state, were it not for the pruning work. Now when God begins to purge his people, they conclude that it is in strict judgment against them; but not so. He does it for their good, that they may bring forth fruit. I have thought sometimes, when God has been purging away my dross and tin from me, that it was in anger; but I have proved, in the end, that it has been for my good; and though I have had some most painful things to pass through, yet I would not have been without them on any account; for the Lord hath ere long said, “ I am still with thee, Israel, passing through the fire.” We do not know what dross we have in us until God purges it away. God hath said he will turn his hand upon thee, (not against thee,) and thoroughly purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin. And what a mercy, poor soul; for if it were not for that, you and I could not be fit to be with a pure and holy God. And what does God say to thee after he has done this? “ Afterwards thou shalt be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.”

But God will do something more for thee, if thou are the fair one

in the text: "And I will purge out the rebels from among you, and them that transgress against me." O poor soul, hast thou ever felt these rebels rise up in thy heart, transgressing against the best of Friends? I have many times, to my shame, felt them, and thought God dealt hard with me. Not long since, when God crossed me and afflicted me, I felt as rebellious as a mortal could do. I felt something of what Jonah did, that I did well to be angry. And how did God purge it away from me? It was a blessed deliverance, and right glad was I of it. I will tell you. He brought to my remembrance the sin of my vanity; not charging the guilt upon my conscience, but like Israel of old, as in Deut. viii. 2, 3, he led me to see what he had done for me; and it seemed to preach such a humiliating discourse to me that I am not favoured with many such. It seemed to say, "Is this thy return?" I fell under it; the rebels flew away like shot; and I, as a little child, said from my heart, "Lord, if thou shouldest send me to hell, I deserve it, for I am a rebellious and sinful creature." O I know what it is to be brought by hard labour, because I have rebelled against him, and to fall down where there is none to help. Then he has appeared for me and delivered me. And this is how he has purged these rebels out of my heart. He hath said we shall be ashamed and never open our mouths any more when he is pacified towards us; and some of them of understanding shall fall,—not into open sin, but from their own understanding, their own ability to do aught that is good. "If any man will be wise, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." Thy self-righteousness, too, must be purged away. Christ and Co. will not do. He will be all in all, or nothing at all to thee. Therefore, I say, if God has been doing this for thee, thou art surely the fair one in the text.

But how came this one to be fair? When was she anything but fair, as viewed in Christ? Yet there was a time when she was as black as sin could make her. The Lord tells us she was cast out into the open field, in her blood; and what was the field but the wide open world of sin and wickedness? So she could not be fair then; and in this state she lay, apparently a child of wrath even as others, for she was no better than they. But God passing by her looked upon her, with a look of love and compassion, took her up and thoroughly washed away her filthiness; he thoroughly did it, not halfway. We read of the diseased persons who came to Christ, and as many as touched were made perfectly whole. This every child of God feels as much as the poor woman did who touched the hem of Christ's garment; and the poor soul feels in that day as free from the disease of sin as if he had never committed a sin in all his life; yea, better than that; he feels he is a new creature. Then he tells us he clothed her and girded her with truth; and she proved the truth of these words, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; for, says this fair one, "I am the chief." And God decked her with ornaments, and put a chain about her neck, which I think sets forth the filial fear of God; for, as wickedness is likened to a chain by which men are led about by Satan to sin, so the fear of

God holds or keeps his people from sin; and he puts bracelets upon her hands, that she might adorn her profession; and her renown went forth among the heathen. And I tell thee, sinner, if thou hast not a religion to go forth among the heathen, amongst ungodly men, and to be separated from them, different in principle and practice, it is not much good to thee. Then said they among the heathen, "The Lord hath done great things for them;" but this fair one says "The Lord hath done great things for me, whereof I am glad." Bless his holy name, he found me a poor despised, miserable, filthy wretch, all in rags and tatters, and has made me a Prince; have I not cause to be glad? And this gladness is not to be compared to that of the world, even when their corn and wine increaseth. No; it is joy and gladness unspeakable; and the Lord has promised to take me to heaven and bear my way thither. I am only now waiting until he is pleased to send forth the porter to conduct me thither. "Perfect through my comeliness which I have put upon thee, saith the Lord." O how free-will is put to silence here! No Christ and creature-merit here! This soul can say from feeling,

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress."

So we see her beauty is in the Lord. By nature the fair one is black; but, as viewed in Christ, she is without spot, wrinkle, or any such thing.

There is one more feature in this fair one that I will speak of, and then pass on; and that is, she is *not long at ease*. When one trial is over, another follows. It is said of Moab he had been at ease from his youth up; but this fair one proves the truth of, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." God hath chosen her in the furnace of affliction. I know one man who has made a profession of religion for thirty or forty years, sits under the sound of truth, and professes, at times, to hear well, yet says he never had any trouble; trouble would not stop with him. I believe there are many sit under the truth in a state of ease and carnal security, gospel hardened, fearing neither God nor man; but, going like the door on its hinges, having no changes, they fear not God. But by-and-by, when all shall appear before the great tribunal of the Son of God, they will begin to say, "Lord, Lord, open to us." But he will answer, "I never knew you. You have never followed me in my sufferings, but have had ease and pleasure upon earth; yea, have boasted of not having any trouble." Then shall they begin to say, "We have eaten and drunk in thy presence;" but all this will be of no avail in that great day of account. They only did it to take away their reproach among men. It was not out of love to the Lord; but God's fair one does it from pure love to him who shed his blood for her. And how often does she fear that after all she will sink and never get through. How often is she bowed down and cannot come forth; but God will say to her, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away; rise up from thy doubts, fears, sinkings, and despondings of heart."

(To be continued.)

THE ADVANCE OF POPERY.

I.

WE intimated in our last No. that it was our intention, with God's help and blessing, to put forth a few articles on Popery. It will not, indeed, be the first time that we have brought that subject before our readers, as in our Vol. XVII., (1851,) when the Pope divided England into dioceses, we wrote somewhat largely upon it. In our Vol. XX., also, (1854,) we took occasion to dwell at some length upon the same important matter. But the time seems come when we are called upon again to sound an alarm. If we have slept, Rome has not. If we have been divided in our opinions, or hesitating in our movements, she has not changed her views or relaxed her energies. Nor does she conceal her intentions. The time for that is almost gone by. She has long fixed her eyes on this country, the grand seat and centre of the commerce of the world, the great leader of civilisation and progress, the land of liberty of speech and action, whose thoughts and words, by means of her free press, spread themselves over every country of the globe where men think and act, the teeming mother of populous and wealthy colonies, the mistress of the seas, and the native home of a language spoken and read by millions of the most active, enterprising, and energetic race on the face of the globe. The amazing moral power of England can scarcely be conceived. In mere physical power, though even that point may be doubtful, other countries may equal or exceed her; but in the influence that she carries as fixing and determining public opinion, which in the end is almost sure to carry the day, no continental nation can approach her. The opinions and actions of a free people must always possess a strength before which despotism grows pale. Now, to crush this moral power, to stamp out this liberty of thought and action, and reduce our free England to slavery and serfdom, is the grand aim of Rome. That this is no visionary dream of ours, but the deliberate intention of Rome and her agents, the following extract from the words of Dr. Manning, the Romish Archbishop and successor of Cardinal Wiseman, will show:

"If ever there was a land in which work is to be done, and perhaps much to suffer, it is here. I shall not say too much if I say that we have to subjugate and subdue, to conquer and rule an imperial race; we have to do with a will which reigns throughout the world, as the will of old Rome reigned once; we have to bend or break that will which nations and kingdoms have found invincible and inflexible. Were heresy (*i.e.*, Protestantism) conquered in England, it would be conquered throughout the world. All its lines meet here, and therefore in England the church of God must be gathered in its strength."—*Tablet*, (a Roman Catholic paper,) August, 1859.

Now the question is, whether we, as Englishmen, as Protestants, as Christians, should fold our hands and let Rome thus have her will? Is it our duty to lay our necks humbly under her feet, and tamely let her advance onward till she has thoroughly "subjugate, and subdued" us? We well know, from the whole of her history, what subjugation and subjection to her mean—that it signifies trampling on all our civil and religious liberties, shutting up our

chapels, burning our Bibles and our bodies too, if she can get the power.

But it may be said, "Why do you interfere in politics? Why do you abandon the position which you have taken and maintained for so many years, not to touch upon political matters?" Unhappily, it is not a political matter. It is a mighty struggle whether truth or error, liberty or slavery, light or darkness, the worship of God or of idols, the Bible or the mass-book, conscience or the priest, Christ or Antichrist shall reign and rule in this land. The calamity which such men as Mede, Fleming, Bunyan, Gill, and Huntington have declared would come to pass now seems to be rapidly accomplishing.

It may be God's will to give us up into the hands of our enemies. For our sins as a nation, for our abuse of the greatest privileges that any land was ever favoured with, it may be the will of God to bring upon us the whole weight of the most crushing slavery that, as an organised system, has ever appeared. But that is no reason why, whilst time permits, we should not avail ourselves of all lawful means to stave off the greatest calamity which could befall us. Amongst these lawful means one is the privilege of petitioning the Houses of Parliament against measures which are most evidently making way for the re-establishment of Popery. These petitions may seem, to some, quite useless, but they have had their weight in both Houses.* And even if they had not, those who signed them would still have the satisfaction of their own consciences in protesting before God and man against measures so crafty and insidious.

Another lawful way is to spread information, and show from the Scriptures the awful errors and doctrines which Rome holds; to point out the progress that she is making, to unmask the nature and tendency of those practices whereby, under the subtle robe of what is called "Ritualism," or Puseyism, she is gaining over whole congregations. You may call all this politics. But if you had a daughter entangled in, and, we may say, seduced by witnessing such practices, or attending such places till she was led on, step by step, to turn Roman Catholic, and become a nun, you would soon feel that it was something more than politics; or if the wife of your bosom should, by the arts of some crafty priest, be in a similar way perverted; should she worry you night and day to turn too, and be determined to bring up your children in the same creed, you might learn there was something more in Popery than, "It is all a question of religious liberty. Let them have their way and we have ours. We never interfere with politics." And were you ever to

* Strengthened by these, the House of Lords has so amended the original oath proposed by Sir George Grey to be taken by all the members of the Legislature as to change the whole nature of the Bill. By a proviso, "The supremacy of the Queen in all matters civil and ecclesiastical, within this realm and other Her Majesty's dominions," is asserted and maintained, and the Act of Settlement which secures that the occupant of the throne must be a Protestant, is confirmed. Thus, by the good hand of God, the designs of the enemy have been frustrated, and the oath actually made more stringent than before.

see what sort of questions the priest is authorised to put, in confession, to your maiden daughter, you would think there is something besides politics in such a mystery of iniquity as Dens's Manual, and other text books used at the College of Maynooth, where the Irish priests are educated, and to which England contributes £30,000 a-year. If your chapel were closed, your minister carried to prison, and yourself heavily fined, would you call that "Politics?" If your house were searched, and every Bible and good book taken away and burnt, would you call that "Politics?" And if you were not allowed to buy or sell, exercise any business, trade, or profession, unless you received the mark of the Beast, would you call that "Politics?" Now, this is what Rome has done again and again in other countries, and what she would most certainly do here were she to regain full power. Let us not, then, be blinded to our real danger by such a foolish plea that we must have nothing to do with politics, but look at the impending danger in the face, and take what precautions we can against it. It is for these reasons, in this spirit, and for these ends, that we here commence our Articles on Popery.

Since our mind has been drawn by recent circumstances to consider the subject of the rapid advance in boldness and strength of the Papal party in prosecuting their designs in this country, we have been struck, not only with the general apathy of all parties in opposing them, but been forcibly impressed with the conviction that one main cause of this almost universal carelessness and listlessness among the great bulk of the large and influential Dissenting community, and amongst them of many of our own connection, is the want of a proper knowledge of, and clear insight into the true character and real end and intention of this aggression. They are too politic and crafty to advance with swords drawn, flags flying, and trumpets blowing, and would rather creep into the fortress by twos and threes, with their weapons under their cloaks, that when the fitting opportunity comes they may overpower the present garrison, and make it their own. To betray prematurely their designs would be to defeat their purpose. But our apathy encourages their advance. A careless, heedless enemy is a half-conquered enemy. Should it be the will of God, on account of our national sins, to abandon us to the tender mercies of Rome, his pouring out a spirit of slumber would be one of the surest symptoms of that impending calamity. But the plans and designs of Rome can only be understood by some knowledge of what Popery is in itself as a system. To disguise, at least for the present, the real character of this system is, of course, Rome's policy; and of her success in so doing we have ample evidence in those late transactions in Parliament, to which we have already directed attention. The question, for instance, of the Oaths Bill is viewed by many as merely a point of what is called religious liberty. Some have objected to sign any petition against it on some such ground as the following: "We have our liberty; let them have theirs. *We* are not tied to make oaths and declarations. Why should *they* be? Let us *all* be equal; be *all* free alike." Some even have such tender feelings as to argue: "It hurts the minds of our

Roman Catholic brethren that any one should testify that their worship of the *Virgia Mary* and of the consecrated host at mass is idolatry. We should, therefore, drop all this persecution, for they consider it persecution, and give them full and free liberty to say what they like and do what they like, without our interference. They cannot possibly hurt us; for should the time ever come when they will make an attempt to seize the reins of power, the nation would rise as one man and hurl them back." We sincerely hope it might be so; but the same apathy and supineness which prevail now may be still greater then, and Rome may mount the throne, not only without opposition, but with general concurrence and approbation. But it should be clearly understood that the removal of the restrictions with which our ancestors bound Popery in this country is not a question of religious liberty. If the Roman Catholics in this country were merely a religious sect, like the Wesleyans, Independents, Baptists, &c., who desire nothing more than the free exercise of their religion, and who have no ulterior objects; if they stood on the same ground even as the Church of England, which claims to be dominant as the Church of the nation, but not to rule and reign over the consciences and the very bodies and souls of all men with sovereign sway, and that at the bidding of an infallible and foreign head, this line of argument would be fair and admissible. But the matter stands on quite different ground. Popery is a political power as well as an ecclesiastical one; and, in fact, the latter is but a mask and a covering of the former. Popery, as a system, does not care about toleration.* Such a word is not in its mouth or vocabulary. What she wants and what she will have, if she can, is dominion—sovereign, supreme dominion over the souls and bodies of men. She accepts toleration just for the present, as O'Connell used to say of emancipation, "as an instalment;" but there is the whole of the rest of the bill behind, of which she will demand, aye, and enforce payment in full, when she is strong enough. This is the real danger. What Rome intends is, by hook or by crook, by force or fraud, to grasp the reins and rule with undivided sway. Rome has never conceded toleration to any one sect or party, to any one doctrine or practice, different from her own. She will take it as in our country, but never gives it, or only under some compulsion which she cannot possibly resist. Witness Spain; witness Italy, till the late great

* The following extract will show Rome's idea of toleration: "You ask if the Roman Catholics were lords in the land, and you were in a minority, if not in numbers, yet in power, what would he do to you? That, we say, would entirely depend upon circumstances. If it would benefit the cause of Catholicism, he would tolerate you; if expedient, he would imprison you, banish you, fine you, possibly he might even hang you. But be assured of one thing, he would never tolerate you for the sake of the glorious principles of civil and religious liberty. . . . Shall I hold out hopes to the Protestant, that I will not meddle with his creed, if he will not meddle with mine? Shall I lead him to think that religion is a matter for private opinion, and tempt him to forget that he has no more right to his religious views than he has to my purse, or my house, or my life-blood? No; Catholicism is the most intolerant of creeds. It is intolerance itself, for it is the truth itself."—*Rambler*, (*Roman Catholic Magazine*), Sept., 1855.

revolution; witness her own seat of power, Rome, where the English Protestants, who, as visitors, pour thousands into her lap, are not permitted to have a place of worship inside her walls, and have only a mean building outside one of the gates; witness the famous encyclical letter of the present Pope, denouncing toleration as one of the worst of heresies; witness the late order to search every traveller's luggage at the Roman frontier, and take away any English or Italian Bible found in it. Is this toleration? Is this religious liberty? Is this only asking for "our religious privileges?" Is this a willingness to stand on the same level with all other religious sects and denominations? It is true that Rome in this country, at present at least, cannot carry out her principles. But she has never abandoned them, and holds them as firmly as when the streets of Paris ran down with blood, at the great massacre of the Protestants, on St. Bartholomew's day, A.D. 1572; and as in Spain, in the days of the Inquisition, during whose palmy reign 32,000 persons were, as heretics, committed to the flames, and 290,000 imprisoned or sent to the galleys.

Seeing then this great general, either ignorance of, or inattention to Rome's real character and designs, we have felt a strong desire to write a little on the subject, and to put forth a few papers which may throw some light upon many points which it is not to be expected that the great bulk of our readers should know. The Romish question is one which requires books that many do not possess, and a line of reading which many cannot or do not pursue from want of leisure, inclination, or opportunity. If, then, we are furnished with means which they do not possess, or of which they cannot avail themselves, it seems to fall within our post to afford them that information which just now may prove seasonable.

The line, then, which we propose to adopt in these papers is to show—

I. The character, aims, and designs of Popery as a system, both civil and ecclesiastical.

II. The reasons which have induced good and great men, such as Dr. Gill and Mr. Huntington, to believe that the designs of Rome will prove successful in this country.

III. The duty of Christians at the present crisis.

I. We shall commence with attempting to give a little sketch of the true character of Popery as a system. To do this fully and properly would, indeed, require a volume, and a much abler pen than ours; for of all systems that were ever contrived to exercise sway over the minds of men, Popery is certainly the masterpiece, there not being a want, a propensity, lust, inclination, or passion in the human mind which she does not in some way meet and adapt herself to. To all who come to her she says, "I have something for you—something which you very much want, and which I only can give you; but it must be on this condition, that you give me your allegiance and render me your full obedience. Be my friend and I will grant you your heart's desire; be my enemy and"—here she inwardly mutters to herself, "I will be the end of you; I will destroy as far as I can, both

your body and your soul—your body by fire and faggot, and your soul by curse and excommunication.” How, then, can we hope to unfold in our limited space the thousandth part of a system like this—a system which numbers its adherents by millions, has an unbroken tradition of more than ten centuries, counts among its subjects kings and emperors—a system which ever has alike held captive the greatest and the least of men, the strongest and feeblest of minds, which has ruled some of the most powerful intellects which have ever lived, and yet can govern with absolute sway the lowest and most ignorant Irishman? What strength, what endurance there must be in a system like this; and how absurd to treat it as a mere bundle of worn-out, effete, and decaying superstitions.

But it may afford us considerable help to understand a little more clearly the true nature and character of Popery, if we can get a right view of her aim and object. In order rightly to understand the actions and movements of men, we must clearly see what their aim is—the end and object which they are bending all their strength to grasp. This they generally strive hard to conceal, masking under some plausible pretences their real designs; but a little close and careful watching will generally lay it bare to a discerning eye. Now of all the various ends and aims of men, none is so eagerly and obstinately pursued as the attainment of *power*. Social rank, wealth, popularity, knowledge, learning, enjoyment of the pleasures of life, are all ends and aims of the men of this world; but even of these most are subordinate to the love of power, and valued only as ministering to it, or as means of obtaining it. What is rank, what is money, but power? Why are mental ability, knowledge, learning, valued? As instruments of power. Search the whole round of human aims and struggles, and you will see that to obtain power is the grand aim of the heart of man. When we say “man,” we mean man in his higher grades of humanity; for many are rather brutes than men, and, drowned in fleshly lusts, care for nothing but what is sensual and vile. A system could not struggle into existence or maintain itself for a year after its birth, which had no higher aims than those of the drunkard, the gambler, or the profligate. But to rule and govern men’s minds with absolute sway, and through their minds to rule their bodies, their property, their very lives, and subject to one supreme will everything that man has and is—to accomplish this is the highest point to which human ambition soars. This is claiming godship: “Ye shall be as gods,” the first temptation presented to the mind of man, (Gen. iii. 5,) and the very language of the proud king: “I will be like the Most High.” (Isa. xiv. 14.) This is just the end, aim, and object of that wonderful system which is called the Catholic or Roman Catholic Church; and could we analyse every movement which has ever been made by her from the time (say about A.D. 800,) when she assumed a definite form as a European power, we should see that to establish a supremacy over all countries and hold sovereign sway over all, from the king on the throne to the captive in the dungeon, has been her invariable policy. And, indeed, what less could content the vicar of Christ? If the Pope represent Christ on earth, and as his

vicar exercise Christ's authority, his power must be co-extensive with that of Christ. There are, then, in theory, no actual limits to his authority; and he is, therefore, bound, according to this view, to carry out in practice the full extent of the theory. It is not a question of doctrines or ceremonies. These are mere outside things, only valued as they help forward the inward aim. Bear this, then, steadily in mind, that the grand aim and end of Rome for centuries has been first to obtain, and then maintain power; and this not merely such trifling power as contents most men's minds. Her insatiable lust for power is that she may have sole dominion over the bodies and souls of men.

But what do we mean by the Pope of Rome? Does anybody who can see into the real state of the case think that all that is meant by the Pope is a decrepid old man at Rome who performs certain ceremonies, gives his blessing once a year from his balcony "Urbi and Orbi," ("to the City and the World,") bestows bishoprics, appoints cardinals, and decides infallibly upon matters of faith? All this is a mere mask—a mere outward show, a pageant, just to feed the eyes and satisfy the religious longings of the natural mind of devotees. Underneath all this train of religious ceremony there is something far stronger, deeper, and more subtle. What we see or read of about the Pope are but the mere movements of a puppet. It is the hands behind the scene in which all the power, and, we may add, all the danger, lie. The Pope is the visible representative, the outward instrument and agent, the ostensible object of all this veneration and devotion. He is nominally and professedly the vicar of Christ; he holds the keys given to Peter to bind and to loose; he is the infallible head to whom all owe allegiance. But this is merely to present something to look at that is visible and tangible; this is merely the fulcrum to enable the lever to act; the culminating spire of a building which gives compactness and unity to the whole. But the real life, the animating breath of Popery is the *corporate body of priests*, all of whom, as unmarried, are dissociated from every bond and tie but that which unites them as one mass, of which each individual unit has, so to speak, no moral existence but in union with the whole body. The Popes, as Popes, have been some of them the wickedest, others the weakest of men. Indeed the principle has long been to choose the oldest and weakest of the college of cardinals, not only that there may be a quick succession, but that the reigning Pope, from bodily and mental infirmities, might not have too much power. Had Popery depended on the Popes, it must long ago have sunk. But it does not depend on the Pope, be he young or old, strong or weak. It depends on the united will and strength of thousands of men scattered all over the world, and occupying every rank and station, from the highest cardinal to the lowest village priest, who, whatever be their abilities, views, or feelings on other points, are all agreed on one, into which they cast all their strength—the power of their church, which in fact means the power of the corporate body of which they are members. What could Popery do in this country but for the priests? Rome would be as powerless here as the Emperor of the

French is, but for these her agents, who are working day and night on her behalf. And they all know to what end they are working. They are not like Church of England clergymen, of divided sentiments, no more a compact and moving mass than a heap of sand by the sea side; and bound, too, by the ties of house and home, wives and children, not to continue in paths of danger to their own worldly interests. It is this unity of object, this one undivided aim, of all her ministers and agents which makes Popery so formidable. Its progress may be slow, but it is the progress of a glacier, which in Alpine regions never ceases to move with all its crushing weight from the mountain pass into the valley below, though its rate of motion is so slow that it is only known by long and patient observation. Rome can afford to wait. She knows what she wants, and what she will have, too, if earth and hell can help her. She never recedes, except as a man steps back that he may jump higher and farther. Nothing will fully satisfy her but to put her foot on the neck of all men, and reign and rule sole lord of their bodies, souls, lives, property, children, and everything that men naturally live, and fight, and die for. Besides which, the possession of power brings with it almost every other object of human desire. Rank, wealth, social distinction, lands and houses, court favour, smiles, and applause of admiring crowds, follow the attainment of power. What a prize for Romish priests, now viewed as mere dissenters, to step into the present position of the Church of England, and occupy, or, as they would say, re-occupy, the noble cathedrals, churches, livings, rectories, and vicarages of the present possessors. What a crown of all their struggles to see their bishops, archbishops, deans, and doctors installed into the palaces and places from which they were once ousted. They have everything to gain and nothing to lose. What a stimulus to all their ambition. It is absurd, therefore, to compare Roman Catholics with other sects, and to view the matter as a mere religious question, as if they stood on just the same ground as the Wesleyans, Baptists, Independents, &c. A Wesleyan, a Baptist, an Independent, does not by his religious views cease to be an Englishman. He does not become part and parcel of a system which has absorbed him into its mass, as, to revert to our figure, the mountain glacier absorbs every particle of ice into its body, so that each particle can move only as the mass moves, and must move with it. No doubt in this country there are many English Catholics who, as citizens and neighbours, are quiet, peaceable men, and not without love to their country. But they are integral parts of a body which will not suffer them to act, or even speak and think, independently of it. With them Catholicism is everything; and Catholicism means a blind, passive, unresisting subjection to a power which controls every movement; for were they to act independently, had they a mind of their own, and unchecked liberty to do what they will, they would *ipso facto* cease to be Catholics. The words of Dr. Manning are striking on this point:

“ Would it be permitted in the Church which is Catholic and Roman that I should now deny that every child baptized receives the infusion of regene-

rating grace? What would become of me by to-morrow morning? You know perfectly well that if I were to depart one jot or tittle from the Holy Catholic faith delivered by the divine voice of the church of God, I should be immediately suspended, and no civil governor or power in the world could restore me to the exercise of my faculties; no civil judge or potentate on earth could restore me to the administration of the sacraments unless the spiritual authority of the church permitted me to do so."—Fourth Lecture on "The Present Crisis of the Holy See," by Archbishop Manning.

In this point they resemble soldiers. Out of barracks the soldier has a certain degree of liberty. But as a soldier, as a unit of the army, he has none. He must simply obey orders. To neglect, disregard, disobey them is to draw down speedy and certain punishment. So the Catholic, as a Catholic, has really no mind, no will, no power, no liberty of his own. He must simply obey orders. He is a member of a highly-organised body, and can no more act distinctly from that body than our arm or leg can. It is this unity of will, this compactness of the mass, this order and discipline, which make Popery so formidable. We have, as it were, in England a vast army all under one head, waiting for orders to move. What keeps this army back? The firm front of Protestantism, the thousands of English hearts and English hands which would resist real aggression on our liberties to the death. It is this Protestant army which has hitherto kept back the Papal forces, and which we fully believed, till late events have much shaken our faith, would ever successfully resist them. We do not yet despair that, should the worst come to the worst, and God do not give us over to the will of our enemies, Protestant England may show herself as in days of yore, and never suffer Rome to rule over us. But things everywhere have a gloomy aspect, as we shall have occasion to show in our future papers.

THE Holy Scriptures are an adorable mixture of clearness and obscurity, which enlighten and humble the children of God, and blind and harden those of the world. The light proceeds from God, and the blindness from the creature.

THE husbandman purchases his fields, and gives a valuable consideration for them; (Jer. xxxii. 9, 10;) so hath God purchased his church with a full valuable price, even the precious blood of his own Son. (Acts xx. 28.) "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased or acquired with his own blood." O dear-bought inheritance, how much doth this bespeak its worth, or rather the high esteem God hath of it, to pay down blood, and such blood, for it; never was any inheritance bought at such a rate. Every particular elect person; and none but such, are comprehended in this purchase; the rest still remain in the devil's right. Sin made a forfeiture of all to justice, upon which Satan entered and took possession, and as a strong man armed still keeps it in them; (Luke xi. 21;) but upon payment of this sum to justice, the elect (who only are intended in this purchase) pass over into God's right and propriety, and now are neither Satan's (Acts xxvi. 18) nor their own, (1 Cor. vi. 19,) but the Lord's peculiar ones. (1 Pet. ii. 9.) And to show how much they are his own, you have two possessions in one verse, Canticles viii. 12: "My vineyard, which is mine, is before me,"—"*Mine which is mine.*"—*Flavel.*

LETTER BY SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

I long to hear how your soul prospereth. I earnestly desire you to try how matters stand between your soul and the Lord. Think it no easy matter to take heaven by violence. Salvation cometh now to the most part of men in a night dream; there is no scarcity of faith now, such as it is; for you shall not now light upon the man who will not say he hath faith in Christ. But, alas! dreams make no man's rights. I beseech you in the Lord, give your soul no rest till you have real assurance, and Christ's rights confirmed and sealed to your soul. The common faith and country-holiness, and week-day zeal, that are among people, will never bring men to heaven. Take pains for your salvation; for in that day, when you shall see many men's labours, and conquests, and idol-riches, lying in ashes, when the earth and all the works thereof shall be burnt with fire, O how dear a price would your soul give for God's favour in Christ. It is a blessed thing to see Christ with up-sun, and to read over your papers and soul accounts with fair daylight. It will not be time to cry for a lamp when the bridegroom is entered into his chamber and the door shut. Fie, fie, upon blinded and debased souls, who are committing whoredom with this idol-clay, and hunting a poor wretched hungry heaven, a hungry breakfast, a day's meat from this hungry world, with the forfeiting of God's favour, and the drinking over their heaven over the board, (as men use to speak,) for the laughter and sports of this short forenoon. All that is under this vault of heaven, and betwixt us and death, and on this side of sun and moon, are but toys, night-visions, head-fancies, poor shadows, watery froth, godless vanities at their best; and black hearts, and salt, and sour miseries, sugared over and confected with an hour's laughter or two, and the conceit of riches, honour, vain and lawless pleasures. If you look both to the laughing side and weeping side of this world; and if you look not only upon the skin and colour of things, but into their inwards, and the heart of their excellence, you will see that one look of Christ's sweet and lovely eye is worth ten thousand worlds of such rotten stuff as the foolish sons of men set their hearts upon. Turn, turn your heart to the other side of things, and get it once free of these entanglements, to consider eternity, death, the clay-bed, the grave, judgment, everlasting burning alive in hell, where death would give as great a price (if there were a market wherein death may be bought and sold,) as all the world. Consider heaven and glory. But, alas, why speak I of considering these things, which have not entered into the heart of man to consider? Look into these depths (without a bottom) of loveliness, sweetness, beauty, excellence, glory, goodness, grace, and mercy, that are in Christ, and you will then cry down the whole world and all the glory of it, even when it is come to the summer-bloom; and you will cry, "Up with Christ, up with Christ's Father, up with eternity of glory." There is a deal less sand in your glass than when I saw you, and your afternoon is nearer eventide now than it was. As a bird carried back to the sea, so doth the Lord's

swift post, time, carry you and your life with wings to the grave. You eat and drink, but time standeth not still; you laugh, but your day fleeth away; you sleep, but your hours are reckoned and put by. O how soon will time shut you out of the poor, and cold, and hungry joys of this life; and then, what will yesterday's short-born pleasures do to you, but be as a snowball melted away many years since, or worse; for the memory of these pleasures useth to fill the soul with bitterness. Time and experience will prove this to be true; and dying men, if they could speak, could make this good. Lay no more on the creatures than they are able to carry. Lay your soul and your weights upon God; make him your only, only best beloved. Your errand to this life is to make sure an eternity of glory to your soul, and to match your soul with Christ. Your love, if it were more than all the love of angels in one, is Christ's due. Other things worthy in themselves, in respect of Christ, are not worth a drink of cold water. I doubt not but in death you will see all these things more distinctly, and then the world shall bear no more bulk than it is worth, and that then it shall be contracted into nothing, and you shall see Christ longer, higher, broader, and deeper, than ever he was. O blessed conquest, to lose all things, and to gain Christ. I know not what you have, if you want Christ. Alas, how poor is your gain, if the earth were all yours in free heritage, holding it of a man of clay, if Christ be not yours. Oh, lay all oars in the water; put forth all your power, and bend all your endeavours, to put away and part with all things, that you may gain and enjoy Christ. Try and search his word, and strive to go a step above and beyond ordinary professors, and resolve to labour more and run faster than they do for salvation. Men's mid-way, cold, and wise courses in godliness, and their neighbour-like, cold, and wise pace to heaven, will cause many a man to want his lodging at night, and lie in the fields. I recommend Christ and his love to your seeking, and yourself to the tender mercy and rich grace of our Lord. Remember my love in Christ to your wife. I desire her to learn to make her soul's anchor fast upon Christ himself. Few are saved. Let her consider what joy the smiles of God in Christ will be, and what a welcome home to the New Jerusalem from Christ's own mouth will be to her soul, when Christ shall fold together the clay-tent of her body, and lay it by for a time, till the fair morning of the general resurrection. I avouch before God, man, and angel, that I have not seen, nor can imagine, a lover to be comparable to lovely Jesus. I would not exchange or barter him for ten heavens. If heaven could be without him, what good could we do there. Grace, grace be with you.

[What weight and power are in the above letter! How weak and poor do all our little preachments and penny post tittle-tattles appear in comparison! —Ed.]

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

THE WALK TO EMMAUS.

Luke xxiv.

IN days of old, two loving friends
 Were to Emmaus walking;
 Their Saviour's absence all their grief,
 In sadness they were talking.
 When, lo! A third drew near, and ask'd,
 "What sad communications
 Are these that ye together have?
 And what are your vexations?"
 "Art thou a stranger?" they inquired,
 Scarcely at all believing
 That any in Jerusalem
 Could wonder at their grieving.
 "Hast thou not heard the mighty acts
 Of that great Prophet Jesus?
 We hoped that he was come to save,
 And from our bonds release us.
 "But though most holy, just, and true,
 Our priests and rulers tried him;
 Deliver'd him to be condemn'd,
 And now have crucified him.
 "And some declare he's yet alive;
 To us 'tis most surprising;
 For angels they have seen, they say,
 Who testify his rising."
 "O fools, and slow of heart," he cried,
 "To credit what is spoken!
 Can ye suppose the faithful word
 Of God can e'er be broken?
 "Ought not the Christ, of whom ye tell
 This sad but wondrous story,
 His awful sufferings to have borne,
 And enter'd into glory?"
 Thus Jesus spake, the mighty God
 Was then with them conversing,
 And all things of himself foretold,
 Most gloriously rehearsing.
 Now drawing near their village home,
 Their eyes still undiscerning,
 While to their new-met stranger friend
 Their hearts with love were burning.
 He made as though he'd further go,
 But, anxious to detain him,
 They much entreat him there to stay,
 Till they at length constrain him.
 Behold him seated at their board;
 What matchless condescension!
 The wondrous stoop that Jesus made
 Exceeds all comprehension.
 And while he bless'd and brake the bread,
 O what divine emotion;
 What joy and love their spirits felt,—
 What rapturous devotion!

'Tis true, his person was withdrawn
 As soon as manifested;
 But the sweet savour of his love,
 Upon their spirits rested.
 Their hearts, brimful of holy joy,
 Can there no longer tarry;
 But, hastening to Jerusalem,
 The blissful news they carry.
 There the glad tidings have arrived;
 Their friends rejoice to meet them;
 "The Lord is risen indeed!" they cry,
 And thus with gladness greet them.
 "Yes, he is risen," they soon respond;
 "We've seen our precious Saviour;
 We did not know his lovely face,
 But O his kind behaviour!
 "He sweetly cheer'd our drooping hearts;
 Our unbelief he chided;
 And almost, ere we were aware,
 Our souls in him confided.
 "He with us to Emmaus went;
 Our hearts were fill'd with sadness;
 But ere he left us, happy change!
 They overflow'd with gladness."
 While testifying of his love,
 See how the Lord approves it;
 At first their hearts are fill'd with fear,
 But sweetly he removes it.
 "'Tis I myself! Behold my hands!
 See how my feet were pierced;"
 (Now they the Scriptures understand,
 They long had heard rehearsed);
 "Thus it is written," saith the Lord,
 "And thus it Christ behoved
 To suffer and to rise again;
 So was his Godhead proved.
 "Thus in all nations shall be preach'd
 Repentance and remission,
 And ye shall be my witnesses;
 I give you that commission."
 Thus were these dear disciples led;
 And must our lips be closed,
 When we the same great mercies feel?
 How can it be supposed?
 Lord, visit us again, we pray;
 Indulge us with thy favour;
 Help us to honour thee below;
 Then dwell with thee for ever.

Mildenhall.

SARAH.

WHEN once a soul is raised to hope, and a knowledge of interest
 in Christ is longed for, or a revelation of Christ to the soul, and when
 faith lays hold of him and gives him a dwelling in the heart, this is
 "God's mystery among the Gentiles, Christ in you the hope of glory."
 —Beeman.

MEDITATIONS ON VARIOUS IMPORTANT POINTS OF OUR MOST HOLY FAITH.

I.

THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL.

(Continued from page 160.)

IN resuming our subject—the *Nature* and *Character* of the Ministry of the Gospel, we feel more and more, at each advancing step, the urgent necessity that is laid upon us of adhering as closely as possible to the word of truth in all that we bring forward upon a matter so difficult and yet so weighty. Let us name a few reasons which impose this necessity upon us.

1. As the ministry of the gospel is purely and wholly an ordinance of divine appointment, it is only from the word of God that its true nature and character can be clearly ascertained.

2. Our own views of the ministry, in its various bearings, have been, we hope we may say, all founded on the word of truth. We have found, from long experience, that in no other way could our mind be clearly instructed, our heart firmly established, or our conscience fully satisfied. We have in times past read upon this point, as on many others, the writings of men; but we have ever found that when we turned from the word of God to listen to the word of man, our mind got full of confusion, and, instead of obtaining light, peace, and satisfaction, we reaped little else but doubt, darkness, and uncertainty.

3. But thirdly. We have undertaken a task of no little difficulty, and yet of great importance. We have not only to satisfy our own mind, and enjoy the verdict of our own approving conscience, under the teaching and the testimony of the blessed Spirit, but we have to satisfy the judgment and commend ourselves to the conscience of a large circle of gracious readers, who can and will receive nothing from us or from any other man which is not fully proved from, and confirmed by the word of God.

4. There are also “many adversaries,” from whom we can expect little else but opposition and contradiction, and against whom our only defence must be the truth as our shield and buckler.

5. But fifthly. The ministry is with us and many others not a mere matter of theory and speculation, but one of vital and practical importance, in which we require to be specially instructed, held up, and supported by the unerring word of God, that we may not be drawn aside by the craft and subtlety of man, or by the deceitfulness of our own hearts, but move and act according to his revealed will and the dictates of a tender and enlightened conscience. We are surrounded on every side by men professing to be ministers of the gospel; and we are thus often placed in circumstances where we must, as a practical matter, come to some decision in our own mind who are and who are not sent servants of Jesus Christ. Now unless we have, more or less, an instructed mind, an established judgment, and an approving conscience, we cannot walk uprightly and equitably either before God or man, when we have to act, and that decidedly

upon this important point. This takes a very wide sweep, and may embrace in its circle very many of our readers. Pastors, deacons, and members of churches are especially and vitally interested in this matter. Indeed, we may say that all who know and love the truth, all who desire to preach or hear the gospel preached in its purity and its power, all who are jealous of the Lord's honour and glory, all who are seeking the good of their own soul and that of others, all who hate and abhor error and evil, all who feel a deep and warm interest in the cause of God and truth with which they are especially connected, all who grieve over the declension visible on every side, all who are anxious for the rising generation, and that they may hand down the gospel which they have received untainted and unadulterated—all such as these, and we trust we have many such among our readers, find and feel that it is with them not a light question to decide who are and who are not the true servants of Christ. Indeed, it often becomes a matter of urgent practical necessity with those who wish to act in the fear of God. How can a church, for instance, choose a pastor, deacons procure a supply for a vacant pulpit, members join or continue united with a church, without bringing this point to some practical conclusion? Is it not, in all these cases, of very great importance to know who are and who are not servants of Jesus Christ? It is also a matter which deeply concerns the conscience; for if to receive one of Christ's servants is to receive Christ, and to despise one of Christ's servants is to despise Christ, (Luke x. 16; John xiii. 20,) we may be much perplexed in mind, if we do not actually sin against the Lord, unless we have some spiritual judgment and discernment in this important matter. These considerations will amply show how necessary it is for us to move at every step in the fullest harmony with the word of truth.

With these prefatory remarks, which, we trust, will not be considered uncalled for or out of place, we now resume our subject.

We attempted to show in our last two Numbers, by an exposition of the apostle's argument, 2 Cor. iii., the distinctive glories of the law and the gospel, and that in some particulars the glory of the new dispensation outshone that of the old. There are, of course, other points of contrast between them; but we dwelt particularly upon those which are brought forward in that chapter. But though we thus insisted upon the superior and surpassing glory of the gospel, let no one gather from that any idea that we think lightly of, or disparage, or set aside the glory of the law. The law, in the hands of the Holy Spirit, as applied to the conscience in its curse, spirituality, and condemnation, has a glory peculiarly its own, for in it the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness. It is the ministration of condemnation, and death; it brings the sinner in guilty before God; it stops his mouth, cuts to pieces all his righteousness, beats out of his hand all excuses, reaches to the thoughts and intents of his heart, and slays him as to any hope or help in self. There is a glory in this; for as God is glorious in his justice, his holiness, his anger against transgression and sin, the law is glorious as the revelation of his righteous displeasure, and the means, in the hands of the Holy

Spirit, of making it feelingly and experimentally known. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. iii. 20.) "Where no law is, there is no transgression." (Rom. iv. 15.) But if there be no knowledge of sin, no conviction of it, no guilt under it, where can there be room for any manifested pardon of it, or any deliverance from its guilt, fear, burden, or bondage? The gospel, it is true, is more glorious, as revealing pardon, justification, reconciliation, and salvation, and especially as giving the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But the law, as revealing God's justice, holiness, majesty, and terrible indignation against sin to the conscience by the Holy Spirit, has a glory of its own, only inferior to the glory of the gospel. "The Lord killeth and maketh alive; he bringeth low and lifteth up." (1 Sam. ii. 6, 7.) "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." (Rom. vii. 12.) Is there no glory in this? The law is spiritual; by its spirituality the inmost thoughts and intents of the heart are brought to light and condemned; and by its curse falling upon every one who continueth not in all things written in the law to do them, all hope of salvation by works is effectually cut away. It is needful to bear these things in mind, lest, in setting forth the superior glory of the gospel, we should tacitly seem to set aside the glory of the law. These considerations are not, indeed, necessary for the clear statement of our present subject, and yet we have thought it best to make them, lest it should appear from our silence on the point that we had wholly passed them by. We now, then, advance a step further in our attempt to unfold the nature and character of the ministry of the gospel.

There is a necessary connection between the gospel and the ministry of the gospel. If, then, the gospel be so glorious, the ministry of the gospel will be glorious also; for the gospel is reflected upon and made known by the ministry: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace." (Isa. lli. 7.) But why should his very feet be beautiful? Because of the beauty of the good tidings which he brings. We find, therefore, the apostle immediately after he had said: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord," (2 Cor. iii. 18,) adds: "Therefore, seeing we have this *ministry*, as we have received mercy, we faint not." (2 Cor. iv. 1.) He thus connects the gospel with the ministry of the gospel. To all believers the gospel is the ministration of righteousness, liberty, &c.; for through it these blessings are communicated to their soul. But all believers are not privileged to minister in the gospel, nor to proclaim with authority, as servants of Christ, the good tidings which have gladdened their hearts. They are "the body of Christ, and members in particular." "But are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers?" No. God hath set some in the church to fulfil these offices; (1 Cor. xii. 27-29;) and those only who are "allowed, (or rather 'approved,') of God to be put in trust with the gospel," (1 Thess. ii. 4,) can preach it with acceptance. The

testimony of God in his word still stands good: "I sent them not nor commanded them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord." (Jer. xxiii. 32.)

But now comes an important question. How shall these trustees of the gospel be able to testify of the glory of the gospel so that power, unction, and savour may rest on their testimony? The apostle shall answer this question. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. iv. 6.) He compares here the shining of God into the heart of his servants, to give the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ, with that wondrous work in creation, when God said, "Let there be light, and there was light." This brings us at once to this point, that unless a man has had the shining in of this light of the knowledge of the glory of God into his heart, he cannot know the gospel experimentally, and, therefore, cannot preach it experimentally. A minister is not only a servant of Jesus Christ, a trustee, and an ambassador, but also a witness. As none could be an apostle but a witness of his resurrection, (Acts i. 22,) so none can be a minister of the gospel who has not seen by faith a risen Christ, and beheld his glory at the right hand of the Father. The Lord, therefore, said to Paul when he made him a minister, "But rise, and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee." (Acts xxvi. 16.) He was to bear witness of the things which he had seen, and of those things in which the Lord would further appear unto him. This was confirmed by the words of Ananias: "And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard." (Acts xxii. 14, 15.) Similar is the language of Peter: "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." (Acts v. 32.) Of the false prophets we read that "they follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing." (Ezek. xiii. 3.) Having, therefore, "seen nothing," that is, of the Person, work, grace, glory, beauty, and blessedness of the Lord—having seen nothing of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, they can witness of nothing. Thus their ministry is "a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart." (Jer. xiv. 14.) How different from this is the language of John: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." (1 John i. 1, 2, 3.)

Now if we look at the apostle's words in which he speaks of this divine shining into the heart, we shall see its connection with the gospel, and, therefore, the ministry of the gospel: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." He calls it "our gospel," that is, the gospel which he and his fellow-apostles preached, and "the glorious gospel of Christ." When, therefore, God shines into the heart to give the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ, it is in the light of the glorious gospel of Christ that this knowledge is given.

We have thus arrived step by step, to this point: 1. That the gospel is a glorious dispensation, as containing in its bosom the gift of the Holy Ghost, the communication of divine life, justification by Christ's righteousness, liberty of spirit, a revelation of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, a perpetual permanency, and a transforming efficacy. These seven points have passed successively under our notice, and, therefore, need not be further dwelt upon. 2. That the ministry of the gospel is a proclamation, a preaching, a testifying of this glorious gospel, and is, in the hands of the Spirit, a blessed means of communicating to the souls of men the rich blessings which the gospel contains in its bosom. 3. That those only can truly testify of this glorious gospel into whose hearts God has shined, to give them the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

We are brought by these considerations to see something of the nature and character of the ministry of the gospel, that it consists in preaching Christ from an experimental knowledge of the glory of God as shining forth in his Person and work. The word "face," we may here remark, may be rendered "Person," for it is in the Person of Christ that the glory of God is seen, he being "the brightness of his glory and the express image of his Person." (Heb. i. 3.) What was the grand subject of Paul's ministry? Christ. "Whom we preach." (Col. i. 28.) But to preach Christ is to preach the whole of Christ—Christ as "the Way, the Truth, and the Life;" Christ as "of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." It is to preach the Person of Christ, and therefore his Deity and eternal Sonship; his holy and pure humanity; his bloodshedding, sacrifice, and death; his glorious resurrection and ascension; his present advocacy and mediation; his sovereign rule as King; his prevailing intercession as Priest; his wise and holy teaching as Prophet; his second coming without sin to salvation, and his judging of the world in righteousness. Christ, therefore, is the sum and substance, the object and subject, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of the gospel. All its glad tidings are tidings of him; its message of peace, its embassy of mercy, its proclamation of grace are from him; its power, its authority, its influence are by him. All its doctrines, all its promises, all its precepts, all its ordinances derive their very being, and all their virtue and validity from him, and testify of him.

We see, then, how comprehensive the ministry of the gospel is, as embracing all that the Holy Ghost has revealed in the word of the Person, work, bloodshedding, obedience, life, death, and resurrection, grace and glory, beauty and blessedness of Immanuel, God with us. All that he is as God and the Son of God, all that he is as man and the Son of man, all that he was, did, and suffered on earth, and all that he is and does in heaven, so far as it is revealed in the word of truth, is the gospel; for it is all full of precious news and happy tidings for the people of God.

Now, that the ministry of the gospel may be in full accordance with the gospel thus revealed and brought to light in the Person and work of the Son of God, and stored up in the Scriptures which testify of him, it must be a clear reflection of the grace and glory thus manifested. And not only so, but it must be penetrated and imbued with the Spirit and grace of the gospel. Besides which, it must exhibit the sanctifying, transforming influence of the gospel, as a revelation of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

These three points are closely connected with, and flow immediately from beholding with unveiled face, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord.

Let us look at this a little more closely. Three things of the greatest importance in the ministry of the gospel are secured thereby: 1. *Purity of doctrine.* What room can there be for error, if we are privileged to see, with unveiled face, the glory of Christ? Such a view of his glory must chase away all darkness and all error. Lies and falsehood cannot live in a heart into which God has shone, to give the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ. 2. Secondly, there is secured thereby a gracious, saving *experience* of the power of the gospel. What experience is to be compared with the blessed shining in of God into the heart? This chases away all airy notions and dim speculations, all mere letter knowledge and doctrinal theory, and becomes the well-spring of a life of faith in the Son of God. 3. Thirdly, the *sanctifying, renewing, and transforming* influence of this beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord secures vital holiness and practical godliness.

We thus see that the ministry of the gospel is not a mere preaching of Christ with the utmost soundness and clearness of doctrine, but embraces also an experimental knowledge of the grace and glory of Christ, that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord, and a life, walk, conduct, and conversation corresponding thereto.

Are we not thus brought to the good old division—doctrine, experience, and practice? We may have arrived at this point by a circuitous way; but we believe it has been step by step according to the word of truth.

But what a wonderful field does this open for the servants of God to walk in. What room is here afforded for the exercise of every gift and every grace. Take the whole range of divine truth, from the glorious Trinity, the sovereignty of God, the everlasting covenant, the election of the vessels of mercy, down to the simplest statements which fell from the Lord's lips in addressing the multi-

tude. The ministry of the gospel embraces them all. Take the whole range of Christian experience, from the first sigh of the convinced sinner to the last hallelujah of the expiring saint. The ministry of the gospel enters into each and all. Take the whole of vital, practical godliness; range through every precept of the New Testament. The ministry of the gospel embraces and enforces every precept there revealed. What room is thus afforded for all the ability, all the gifts, all the wisdom, all the discernment, all the experience, all the power, and all the usefulness of all the true ministers of Jesus Christ. There need be no grudging here. The field is wide enough for thousands of ministers, were the Lord but pleased to send them, and raise up a people to hear and receive them. Whatever talent, learning, or education a man may have, here it may be put to a good use. Whatever gifts of utterance a man may possess, here is a wide, effectual door for it. A Peter, who had been on the mount of transfiguration; a Paul, who had been caught up into the third heaven; a Stephen, "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost;" an Apollos, "an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures;" a Barnabas, the very son of consolation; a holy John, who had lain in the Lord's bosom, and many of less known name and fame found room in this field for the exercise of every gift and every grace bestowed upon them by the Holy Ghost. O, our unbelieving hearts; O, our narrow minds; O, our slender abilities, weak gifts, and feeble graces! Let none complain of the narrowness of the gospel field. Is the love of God in the gift of his dear Son a narrow love? Is the Person of Immanuel a narrow object of faith? Is his work, his blood, his righteousness, his sufferings and death, his resurrection and present intercession? Is his compassion, faithfulness, and tender mercy? Is his presence, Spirit, and ceaseless watchfulness and care? Is his second coming in the clouds of heaven—are these wondrous and divine realities, the present support and comfort, all the salvation and all the desire of thousands of poor and needy followers of the Lamb, narrow, limited, contracted? O shame be upon us if we think for a moment that the ministry of the gospel, whose high, holy, and happy privilege it is to testify of these divine and heavenly realities, is a narrow field. Let us rather, if engaged in it as servants of Christ, beg of the Lord to enlarge our hearts and open our mouths; and, if hearers, that he would bless their testimony to our soul, that we may see and feel more and more what a glorious gospel the gospel of Christ is. Indeed, it must be glorious, as revealing in a way beyond every other way, and illuminating, with a lustre surpassing the brightness of the sun, the most glorious attributes of God.

1. Is God glorious in his holiness? (Exod. xv. 11.) The gospel reveals this holiness, sets it visibly forth, and brings it conspicuously before our eyes in the Person of "the Holy One of Israel," as he appeared on earth,—in our blessed Lord, who was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." (Heb. vii. 26.) The gospel is declared to be the holy commandment delivered unto us;" (2 Pet. ii. 21;) our calling by it is a "holy calling;" (2 Tim. i. 9;) our

conversation in it a "holy conversation;" (2 Pet. iii. 11;) as the elect of God we are "holy and beloved;" (Col. iii. 12;) our very bodies as temples of the Holy Ghost should be presented "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God;" (1 Cor. iii. 17; Rom. xii. 1;) and the gracious Lord will, at the great day, present all his saints "faultless before the presence of his glory, holy, and unblameable, and unproveable in his sight." (Col. i. 22.)

2. Is God glorious in his *wisdom*? The gospel is the greatest display of the wisdom of God, which he has ever afforded or ever will afford. It harmonises all his attributes, reconciles his justice and mercy, pardons sin and yet condemns it, saves the sinner and sanctifies him, defeated Satan by the seed of the woman whom he had tempted, and by death destroyed him who had the power of death. Angels read in the gospel the wisdom of God; (Eph. iii. 10;) and whilst it outwits, destroys, and brings to nought all the wisdom of this world, it is "the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which he ordained before the world unto our glory." (1 Cor. i. 18-24; ii. 6, 7.)

3. Is he glorious in *power*? The gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." (Rom. i. 16.) "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." (1 Cor. i. 18.) The speech, therefore, and the preaching of the gospel, is "not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power that the faith of the hearers should not stand in the wisdom of men, but the power of God." (1 Cor. ii. 4, 5.)

4. Is he glorious in his *love*? Where is there such a display of his love as in the gift of his dear Son, such a revelation of it as in the Person of Jesus Christ, such a proclamation of it as in the gospel? This is the very language of the gospel: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.) And again: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John iv. 10.)

5. Is God glorified in having a people to love and obey him, and *bring forth fruit*? "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." (John xv. 8.) But how can this fruit be brought forth, except by being dead to the law, and married to Christ in and by the gospel? "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." (Rom. vii. 4.)

Thus in every way the gospel may well be called, "the glorious gospel of Christ." And how blessed is it that the glory of God, which is, and must be the great end of all his works, should so harmonise with the salvation of our souls that God is more glorified in pardoning our sins than in punishing them, in saving our souls than in damning them, in taking us to heaven than in sending us to hell.

What glorious tidings are these for the servants of Christ to proclaim. Well might the Lord bid his disciples, "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Well might he bid them, in the words of the prophet, "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you." (Isa. xxxv. 3, 4.) And again, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." (Isa. xl. 1, 2.) What tidings to tell to poor guilty sinners, that mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other; that God can be just, scrupulously and inflexibly just, and yet the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus; that there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus; that none shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect; that all things work together for their good; and that neither death nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This, then, is the gospel—this the *nature* and *character* of the ministry of the gospel. Happy they who from a sweet experience of its power preach this gospel; happy they who hear, believe, and obey this gospel; happy they who live this gospel, and happy they who die in the faith, hope, and love of this gospel.

Obituary.

THOMAS CHANDLER, MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

My dear Sir,—I send you a brief account of the departure of our beloved friend, Mr. Thomas Chandler, for many years the honest and faithful minister of Edenbridge. He departed this life Thursday, March the 29th, 1866, in the 69th year of his age.

I deeply regret not being able to gather together more of the facts connected with his life; but as he has not left anything behind him in writing, and, true to his usual quiet and retiring character, had forbidden his widow to say anything about his departure beyond that "he is gone to eternal rest," the information I can supply must of necessity be very brief and fragmentary.

As far as I can gather, he was called by grace under the ministry of the late Mr. Geo. Payton, of Edenbridge, whom he succeeded; and, as I have heard him say in my pulpit, the law work under which he passed was short and slight compared with what many of the Lord's people and servants are called to suffer; but no man could be more clear and consistent than he was, whether he spoke of the law or the gospel, and it was manifest to his gracious hearers that he was experimentally acquainted with both. He has told me of some of his early trials in the ministry, which were neither light nor few. He

was by trade a baker, and carried on business in Edenbridge for many years, and strove to his utmost to support himself and family by his business; but was eventually compelled to give it up, and cast himself upon the kind care of his gracious Master, who kindly blest and supported him, and enabled him to pay his way. He has frequently, too, told me of the unkindness he often received from the people, and the way in which he used to be compelled to take his griefs and sorrows to his heavenly Friend.

His death was caused by cancer of the bowels, which fearful disease laid him by for about three years; and the sufferings he endured were truly of the most agonising kind. I several times visited him during his severe affliction. I often heard him groan; but I never once heard him murmur. On one occasion I visited him, with a little money our congregation raised for him, as a token of their love and sympathy. I shall never forget that event, nor his language. He said, "Thank the dear friends a thousand times; and," he continued, "tell them what a good Master I have got. I am better paid now I cannot work than I was when I could. Most masters take off their servants' pay when they are disabled; but my Master doubles mine. O for a heart to praise him!" He was the most generous and unselfish man I ever knew. On the occasion just referred to, after a few minutes' silence, he looked up, and said, "Winslow, I cannot take all this; you must share a part, for your next collection is near, and your poor people will not be able to give then. In reality, this comes out of your pocket." I replied, "Hold your tongue; the Lord has been beforehand, and I shall have to tell you, when the quarter has passed, that the collection you predict will be short will be the best ever made at the doors for years." It proved to be as I prophesied, and we rejoiced together. I only allude to this as a proof of his disinterestedness. "Money and means" were not his theme. He desired "fruit to abound to the people's account." But he was not a covetous man, which fearful sin, though so many apologies are made for it, is denounced by the God of heaven as "idolatry;" and though it neither excludes from pulpit nor pew, it excludes from the kingdom of heaven. He was "a lover of good men, given to hospitality, apt to teach," and "a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

I wish I could recollect one-half of what passed between us; but I cannot. On one occasion, Mr. Stedman, who had been kindly preaching for him, went into his bed-room; and, finding him so racked with pain, Mr. S. could not refrain from tears, and said, "Can it be possible that a child of God, loved by a loving Father, can be allowed to lie and suffer as you do? I cannot make it out." "When," Mr. S. said, "his eyes sparkled with unusual lustre," and, in reply to Mr. Stedman's remark, he said, "Cannot you understand it? I can. Fools, because of their transgressions, are afflicted. There is the secret. My sins are forgiven me for his name's sake; but whom he loves he chastens. It is my sins that have procured this."

The last time I saw him was three days before his death. I never shall forget him. I saw that death had received its commission,

JULY 2, 1866.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

JULY, 1866.

MATT. V. 6; 2 TIM. I. 9; ROM. XI. 7; ACTS VIII. 37, 38; MATT. XXVIII. 19.

A BLESSED EXHORTATION.

“ Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.”—Song ii. 10.

(Concluded from page 167.)

II. I will now try to show what this fair one is exhorted to *come away from*, and the means God uses to bring her away. Sometimes these means are painful, but all are profitable. I need not say she must come away from *every sin*, as to the wilful practice of it, having shown what a holy principle it is that restrains her from sinning. I will only say that an immortal principle in the heart forbids her to sin. But I shall show the warfare; for there are false lights, false guides, false friends; yea, a thousand snares may enclose his feet, but not one shall hold him fast; for the Lord will say, “ Rise up and come away;” and the child of God will know the voice and be enabled to attend to it; as dear Berridge says:

“ If Jesus kindly say,
And with a whispering word,
' Arise, my love, and come away,'
I run to meet my Lord.

“ The world now drops its charms;
My idols all depart;
Soon as I reach my Saviour's arms,
I give him all my heart.”

This fair one often gets entangled with the things of time. The things of the world take her mind away from the things of God; and if we get too much entangled with the world we may expect trouble from the world. I once went to a man of the world for help, when in distress, instead of going to God earnestly by prayer; and although he let him help me, yet afterwards he suffered him to persecute me. Ah! then I saw the rod and him that had appointed it. The Egyptians must help Israel in the time of famine; but when God's time came to bring them away from them, they then persecuted them and dealt hardly with them; so that they were willing at last to come away from them.

But there are other means God uses sometimes to draw our minds away from time and sense. I remember once getting into a lukewarm state of mind, as to the things of God. If I remember right, for about twelve months I went to and from the house of God like a

was by trade a baker, and carried on business in Edenbridge for many years, and strove to his utmost to support himself and family by his business; but was eventually compelled to give it up, and cast himself upon the kind care of his gracious Master, who kindly blest and supported him, and enabled him to pay his way. He has frequently, too, told me of the unkindness he often received from the people, and the way in which he used to be compelled to take his griefs and sorrows to his heavenly Friend.

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But there are other means God uses sometimes to draw our minds away from time and sense. I remember once getting into a lukewarm state of mind, as to the things of God. If I remember right, for about twelve months I went to and from the house of God like a

door on its hinges, and I seemed in such a state I could not feel any love to God, his people, or his ways, and hardly had a desire that was good. I hope I shall never get into such a state again; yet truly I have since then, but not for any length of time, for God has given me more ballast to keep me where he would have me to be. But O how good was God to me in those days! Why did he not leave me then? Ah, why indeed?

“His love was great, his mercy free,
That from the pit deliver'd me.”

I will mention his loving-kindness. One night I dreamed that I was in a certain place with two of my children. They were playing round me, and all seemed happy and well; but suddenly they fell down dead at my feet; yet such was my happy frame of mind that I could not make a trouble of it. The Lord's help was so sensibly felt that I could bear up under it all. Shortly, however, he withdrew from me his sensible presence, and then, O the distress I was in! I said to one that was near to me, “I could suffer the loss of my children, and say, ‘Thy will be done,’ when his presence was with me; but now that he has left me, what shall I do?” O how keenly did I feel the loss of my two boys, but most of all the loss of him who was my support and my all. Such was my anguish of soul that I cried and awoke myself; and I was led to reflect upon my dream thus: “What can all this mean? This is none other than the voice of God; for God speaketh once, yea, twice, in a vision of the night,” &c. Sleep was far from me. Up I got, went down stairs, got the Bible, and read there upon my knees in prayer; and I believe it was prayer that God heard, because he indited it. His word was like honey to me. Promise after promise flowed into my heart, so that I was like a little child at his feet, and I was thus enabled to come away from the things that had so long entangled me.

Thus God does, by means like these, say, “Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.”

Now look at Jacob. I can assure you his case has done my soul good since that. We find that Jacob had got into a different state of mind than he once was in; so that it would seem God had to remind him of himself again; and when he appeared to him he said, “I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar and vowedst a vow unto me.” As though he had said, “I am the same God still, though thou dost seem to forget my former mercies. Now arise, get thee out from this land and return unto the land of thy kindred.” “And Rachel and Leah said unto him, Is there yet any more portion or inheritance for us in our father's house?” No, certainly not, poor soul. The Lord is thy portion and thy inheritance; therefore come away, my love, my fair one. This is not thy rest, it is polluted. Don't think of making thy rest here, for God will surely stir thee and lead thee forth to meet another trial, as he did Jacob; and thou shalt again earnestly seek his face and see it in the appeasing of the wrath of thy enemy. O what a blessed thing it is for thee if God is leading thee about and instructing thee. The Lord said Jacob is his portion; and he is thy portion. What more canst

thou want, poor soul? "O," says the soul, "I want to know that. Nothing else will satisfy me." Blessed art thou, then, for flesh and blood hath not given this feeling to thee, but thy Father which is in heaven. Blessed are the eyes that see the things that thou seest, and hear those things that thou hearest.

But to pass on; these fair ones must come away from a *false profession*. There are many in their first state yet entangled in a false profession; and God says, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate. Touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you." Thy Father hath laid up for thee an inheritance that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for thee. All that remains for thee is to be obedient and come out from them and be separate. God says he will bring them out from the people and bring them to their own land, that flows with milk and honey, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel, by the rivers, &c. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God."

But again, come away from *false brethren*. Paul tells us he had been in perils among false brethren; by which we are led to understand he was apparently in a very dangerous place. Paul, as a dear father in Israel, warned his son Timothy of these things.

What a proneness there is in us to lean upon an arm of flesh, until sensibly being brought to prove that man in his best state is as a thorn hedge. Have you ever been so simple as to trust to man, telling him your secrets and your temptations, and perhaps of some sins that you had fallen into long before called by grace? You may have felt such confidence in him that it seemed as if you could trust your life in his hands. How contrary is all this to God's word; and he will make you feel it too. "Trust ye not in a friend; put no confidence in a guide;" "for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders." Yes; when you have opened up your heart to a friend, your temptations will, perhaps, be magnified into transgressions; and sins of your youth, or of the days of your unregeneracy, will be brought forward as though they were an act of yesterday. This will be spread abroad for many miles, so that you may be looked upon as a vile character, and your peace on earth be broken. O how keenly have you felt this; your rest has been broken, wearisome nights have been appointed for you, and now you see your folly, and you are afraid the good ways of God will be evil spoken of, while you feel you had rather die than bring a reproach upon the cause of God. O this is sharp work! Like David you have said, "O that I had wings like a dove, then would I flee away and be at rest." Read the whole psalm. (lv.) There is a mighty voice which says, "Rise up, and come away." God hath said, "Cease from man;" yet you and I have not attended to that exhortation; so it must be burnt in. The little that I do know I have had to pay dearly for. It has cost me many pains, sighs, groans, and tears. We are commended to "buy the truth and sell it not;" also "wisdom, instruction, and understanding." And this is how I have bought it—by painful experience. A man that bears false witness against his neighbour is a sword and a sharp arrow. But God, who hath said a bruised reed he will not

break nor quench the smoking flax, will help you, and bid you rise up again. Hear what David says: "Thou who hast showed me great and sore troubles shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up from the depths of the earth. Thou shalt increase my greatness and comfort me on every side." Cast thy burden upon him; he will sustain thee. He will never suffer the righteous to be moved. If called to pass through these fires, all that thou wilt lose will be thy dross and tin; and when thou art refined, thou shalt have to say, from a feeling sense of his goodness, "The Lord is good; a strong-hold in the day of trouble. He knoweth them that trust in him." My only object in noticing these things is to encourage those who may have to pass through similar trials, and that it may be a word of caution, especially to those who are young in the way, not to open the secrets of their hearts; no, not to the dearest friend they have. God hath said, "What thou hast seen, write in a book." For what purpose? I answer, for the comfort of others that should come after. And did not Paul write and speak of the things that he had tasted, handled, and felt? Yes; and the Holy Spirit has indeed blessed his testimony to the poor. But what is man, when left to the workings of his depraved heart? Well might one of old cry out, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?"

Lastly on this head, there is *self* to come away from. Enemies have never done me any real harm, because God hath hitherto turned all to my good. No thanks to them. They have done what they could; but those things that dwell at home often rise up in battle array against me, and I often fear that I shall one day fall as a prey to their teeth. What sad havoc do Satan and our own hearts make at times. Satan will sometimes come and puff us up with pride. Ah! he does, sinner; and then darkness is sure to follow. God hides his face; then down thou sinkest and wonderest how this will end; till at length God shows thee thy pride, shows the rod and him that has appointed it. Then where art thou? At his dear feet, like a child pleading for pardon: "Lord, keep me for the future. Lord, do as thou seest best with my body, but do come and speak to my inmost soul. O how I hate myself. I seem a burden to myself. I have not one good work to plead; and if my soul were left to sink, it would be what I well deserve." The soul seems shut up and shut out. He calls upon God, but he appears to take no notice of him; yet cry he does, must, and shall; for God hath said it. He goes to God and says, "Lord, thou hast blessed me many times, but I cannot rest upon that. I rest upon what thou hast said in thy word. Here I will trust; here I will rest; and if thou dost never more appear, I will keep reminding thee of thy word."

Now I say this is God's teaching, to bring the soul away from self. It is our own strength we must come away from. And how does God do this? Is it not by showing us our weakness? Peter said he would not deny his Lord; but he did, thus showing him in whose strength he stood. I have sometimes felt that sweetness, dew, and savour from the word that I have said I could die in such a state. Then I have thought, "I am strong. This will be easy work for the

future." O what volumes there are to be found in his word! Now the soul feels as strong as a lion, knowing in whose strength he stands; but perhaps the next time, O how dark! O what weakness! Where can such sweetness be that I felt and enjoyed but the other day? Ah! poor soul. God is causing thee to come away from thy supposed strength. Then this fair one can repeat the language of the poet as his own:

" Lord, it is not life to live,
If thy presence thou deny;
Lord, if thou thy presence give,
It is no longer death to die."

Then Satan will say, " Ah! depend upon it there is something wrong about you." " Yes," says the soul, " I am sure there is; for I feel it." " Yes," says he, " you are wrong at the bottom. You are one of those almost Christians, not quite. What you enjoyed was flesh, you are not like God's people; and what if, after all, you should not be right?" " Ah!" says the soul, " I could wish I had not opened my mouth at all. O if I had my time to live over again I would act more wisely, I would not deceive the people like this. Lord, forgive me. If I am wrong, do put me right, cost me what it may. If thou hast not begun a good work upon my soul, do begin it now." And while God is thus trying thee, thou pourest out a prayer like that of Jehoshaphat: " O God, wilt thou not judge them? For we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do. But our eyes are upon thee."

O it is a blessed and yet painful thing to be brought away from our own strength and to say feelingly, " In the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

III. The *end* God hath in view. It is that God may be all and in all. David said, " I love the Lord, because he hath heard my prayer. Because he has inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live." Then he tells us what God had done for him, and adds: " What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." Now this is what God delights in, to hear his children calling upon him.

I could mention many trials that God has brought me through, and in which he has made himself very precious to me; but I will mention only one. At that time I thought my heart would break with sorrow. I was truly like one going deranged. I longed for death and it came not; yea, I even begged of God to take my life away rather than let me live, as I then feared I should bring a reproach upon his name and cause. " O Lord, if thou wilt appear, I will tell poor sinners what a good God thou art. I will tell them not to despair, as thou canst save to the uttermost." And never can I forget while I have my being the blessing that I felt in reading Matthew x. O! I never felt such love to the Lord before. I felt him to be my Friend that loveth at all times. I never shall forget how sweetly this was applied: " Fear not them that kill the body, &c.; but rather fear him that is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

Ah! then I saw what it was for—to wean me from all on earth, and to cause me to love him more and more. Then this: “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall to the ground without *your Father*. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows.” “Ah!” I said,

“Blest is the sorrow, kind the storm,
That drives us nearer home.”

And under this sweet anointing, I cast myself wholly into his hands, to do as he thought best with me. I felt that if he said, “Die,” I could respond, “Thy will be done.” How many times have I looked back to that time, and longed for the same feeling.

God hath said, “The loftiness of man shall be brought down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.” Therefore I say it is to bring his people away from everything here that we might come up out of the wilderness, leaning upon our Beloved. As Gadsby says:

“When self and nature die,
And all our beauty's gone,
The Saviour brings us nigh
To trust to him alone.
'Tis then we trust his righteousness,
And rest alone on Sovereign grace,
“Thus Jesus wears the crown.
We gladly trace the power
That brings all nature down,
And leads us to adore
Jesus, the Lord our righteousness,
Who saves in every deep distress.”

The time is fast rolling on when God will take his fair ones away from these things to where there will be no tempting devil, no sin, no woe, no trying world, no false friends. O that we may be able to say with Paul, “I have fought a good fight; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which God, the righteous Judge, will give me in that day.” Do we long for the Lord's appearing? Shall we be counted worthy to receive the crown?

I shall now leave these few hints in the Lord's hands to do with them as seemeth good in his sight. My desire is that they may be a comfort to his family. I have not borrowed them, stolen them, nor learnt them by the mere dint of study, but have stated what I have passed through in my soul's feelings; and if this is the teaching of God's children, I dare not say I am not one of them. By this testimony I stand or fall.

AN ENGINE DRIVER.

WHEN do our pulses beat slowest after heaven? When do our souls pant the least after our eternal home? Alas! It is when our pride rustles in silk, when our greatness is clothed in purple and embroidered with needlework; when riches flow in upon us, and descend like rain into a fleece of wool; when honour smiles upon us, and everything that we take in hand succeeds. O! Success without grace is the greatest curse that can befall us.—*Daniel Rowland*.

THE ADVANCE OF POPERY.

II.

OUR main object in taking up the subject of Popery at this present crisis is not so much to show its erroneous doctrines as to expose its practical principles, and especially those which threaten our civil and religious liberties. Not but that it is needful, as occasion serves, to denounce its deadly errors; not but that there is scarcely a doctrine of its creed which it has not made subservient to acquire pelf or obtain power; not but that the heaven of its views, as we so plainly see in what is called "Puseyism," or, as it is now termed, "Ritualism," is usually the first preparation for acting upon its practical principles. But Papal Rome now comes before us, not so much in her religious as her political aspect, as openly aiming to regain her ancient dominion in Protestant England, and erect her throne in these isles in more than her former strength and splendour. Let no man think that religion, in the usual sense of the word, is her aim. The scoffing jeers of the Irish priests against those whom they call "swaddlers," "souters," and "jumpers," that is, the earnest Protestants and their converts, evidently show their hatred of everything spiritual and godly. His holiness the Pope, the holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, the holy nuns who espouse themselves to Jesus Christ, and devote themselves day and night to his service, the holy priests who offer the sacrifice of the mass, and confess and absolve weeping penitents, the holy altar on which the consecrated wafer is laid, the very holy water with which every devout Catholic sprinkles himself, all these have a show, and only a show, of holiness. But this is only the outside, necessary to attract the eyes, and subjugate, as by a superstitious charm, devotees who yearn after something to pacify the conscience. Rome uses all these arts to secure her grand end, and values them only as subservient to it. She may put forward religion, but this is not her real aim. Power, as we showed in our last No., is her grand aim, and power of a nature to which there never has been a parallel. The world has seen, at various times and in different ages, the prevalence of almost every form of ambition. Tyranny, oligarchy, democracy have all claimed dominion over men, and asserted their claims with various degrees of success. But these forms of government have been usually satisfied with ruling men's bodies, and extracting money from their purses. As long as they could command the bodily services of their subjects in war and peace, and obtain supplies for their support, their luxury, or their ambition, they were content. But to obtain this dominion over men's bodies, or even over their purses would but half satisfy Rome. These, indeed, she takes good care to obtain; but she has far deeper and more ambitious views. To rule our minds, to subjugate our consciences, and to control our thoughts; to claim such an absolute authority that every doctrine which she teaches is infallibly true, and every doctrine which she denounces is infallibly false; so to hold the keys of the kingdom of heaven that whatsoever she binds on earth shall be bound in hea-

ven, and whatsoever she looses on earth shall be loosed in heaven, is, according to her views, her special right and undeniable prerogative, the gift to her as Christ's representative on earth. Language cannot express how deeply laid is the scheme, how subtle the policy of this claim. But a system of such breadth and height, of such strength and endurance, must have a proportionate basis on which to rest. Now see the basis on which the whole system of Papal Rome stands. It is so simple that a child may understand it; it is so strong that nothing but the power of God can overthrow it. And yet it rests on a mere assumption; in other words, a pretence; but an assumption so subtle and so strong, that if once granted every consequence which Papal Rome claims flows from it as certainly as a stream flows from its source. It is simply this, that the Pope, as the head of the church, is the vicar of Christ; that is, he is to us in Christ's place, is his earthly representative, and as such wields his authority and power. We may safely say that a scheme so subtle and so compact emanated from a source far exceeding the deepest policy of man. To build up a kingdom on earth which should substitute itself for the kingdom of Christ; which should avail itself of the promises of Christ to his church, to rear up a counterfeit church; which should take the Lord's words to Peter, and found upon them a claim for Peter's successors; which should, as endued with the authority of Christ, persecute the saints, and banish all true faith and truth itself out of the world; such a scheme as this is rather a masterpiece of hell than an invention of man, thoroughly, indeed, adapted to his nature, or it would not work, but a contrivance of that fallen spirit who unites the subtlest intellect with the most consummate wickedness. Few seem to have thoroughly considered this scheme, though it is the basis on which the Romish church is built. Let us then devote a few sentences to its consideration. It seems monstrous to us that a poor, frail, fallible, sinful man should dare to call himself the representative of Christ upon earth; and when we look at the moral character of some of the popes,—“robbers and highwaymen, lovers of harlots, and advanced by their influence to the Papal chair,”—men whom their own celebrated annalist Baronius* calls “monsters,” and yet as popes claimed to be representatives on earth of the holy Lamb of God in heaven, astonishment and indignation may well possess our minds. But such is the claim of Papal Rome, as fully worked out into a regular system by Gregory VII., often called Hildebrand, and now carried to its highest point by the ultramontane† party in this country. Now once admit the

* We have verified these assertions from the exact words of Baronius as given in “The Sketch of the Romish Controversy,” a valuable compilation, in two volumes, of authentic documents, by George Finch, Esq., of Burley on the Hill, Rutland.

† There have always been two parties in the Romish church, the ultramontane and the cismontane, literally the party on the *other side* of the mountains, i.e., the Alps, viz., the Italian party, and that on *this side* of the mountains, viz., the Gallican or French party. The former party hold that the Pope is infallible in himself, that is, as regards doctrine, and is above all councils, general or particular. The latter, that in spirituals the Pope is

truth of this doctrine that the Pope is Christ's representative, his holy, infallible vicar on earth, and all that this party claims necessarily follows. But you will say, How can men in their senses believe such a monstrous doctrine? That men in their senses do believe it is as plain as the sun at noonday. Whence and why they believe it is another matter. God sometimes sends men strong delusions that they should believe a lie. Satan, the god of this world, blinds the minds of them which believe not. When, then, some object is to be attained, nothing is incredible which will secure it. Add to this the blinding effects of superstition, custom, tradition, education, and inveterate prejudice, and you have ample grounds of persuasion.

But it is, you will say, contrary to reason to believe that a man like the Pope, and especially a bad man, should be the earthly representative of the holy Son of God. So it is. But do you think that the majority of men's minds are open to reason? Just try if you can reason men out of their errors. You can no more reason men out of their errors than you can reason men out of their sins. Try your hand, for instance, with a drunkard. Can you reason him out of his love of drink? So try a Jew or an infidel, if you have confidence in the power of reason, and see what your strong arguments can do with either of them. You will find when you try the same with a Roman Catholic, that you may stir his wrath, but can never convince his mind or touch his conscience. He is more likely to bring his shillelagh to bear upon your pate than for your reason to bear upon his heart, conscience, or understanding.

Were all this a mere matter of individual belief, and did not go farther than a quiet faith, such as it is, we might lament the delusion, but need not arm ourselves against the consequences. It is when this creed not only claims the assent of our minds, but would force itself upon us as if at the point of the sword, that it becomes perilous. This is the present danger; for depend upon it, if Rome should regain her ancient power in this country, she will use it. She has never been satisfied with a nominal rule, or to hold in her grip a barren sceptre. Her very constitution, the very principle on which she is built, demand action. Could Rome, then, be dominant, and not make a clean and clear sweep? No; not she.

Remember, that she disallows toleration; that it is in her eyes a crime, and that she claims the repressing of heresy as her peculiar prerogative and charge, her sacred duty, as wearing Peter's two swords. Assume, then, that, advancing step by step, she at last gains supreme dominion in this land. Assume, also, a combination of political circumstances to facilitate this. Say that a universal rebellion in Ireland, a French invasion, most disastrous reverses in trade and commerce, a Parliament split to pieces by faction, or filled

subject in doctrine and discipline to the Church, and to a general council representing her. They also deny his personal infallibility, and hold that a general council can depose a pope, as was done at the Council of Constance, A.D. 1414; and that of Basle, 1431. Archbishop Manning, in this country, and Archbishop, now Cardinal, Cullen, in Ireland, are strong ultramontanes, and, strange to say, so are most of the French bishops.

with Roman Catholic members, entanglement in foreign alliances—any of which events might easily occur—say, then, that political circumstances compelled our governors to make terms with Rome; and assume that, seduced by fair promises or urged by stern necessity, the nation generally gave way and submitted to the Papal yoke. Expediency is the order of the day, and expediency would prevail over all other considerations. Religion with our governors would be as nothing compared with the political necessities of the State. At present one religion is thought to be quite as good as another, and that a good Catholic is as good a man as a good Protestant—it all being a question of divinity and theological opinions, and that all Christians are alike the children of one heavenly Father. No question, then, of religion or conscience would keep them back. We see already how questions of religion are treated in the House of Commons, and that it is only named to be ridiculed. The public press and popular writers all follow in the same wake, and are gradually preparing the minds of thousands to rest in the same latitudinarian indifference. All such might not themselves turn Papists, but would not oppose it with any strength or determination. Hundreds of the clergy are imbued with Popish principles, and by the charms of spectacle, music, vestments, and unwearied teaching have leavened whole congregations with similar sentiments. These would at once go over and become Rome's firmest adherents. Converts are proverbially enthusiastic, and more zealous, active, and energetic than those who are cradled in the system. Example is contagious, especially when to follow it brings advantage, and to refuse it entails loss or peril. Hundreds would, therefore, follow their example; and if fashion led the way, and Popery became the fashionable religion, it would be as much followed as the last new bonnet or the fresh Parisian mantle. Rome wants no conversion, in our sense of the term. Acknowledge her as the only true church, submit to her baptism, and pledge yourself to her creed, and you are as good a Catholic as Archbishop Manning. It would take only a turn or two on the pivot to wheel the Church of England to face Rome instead of Canterbury, and make the Pope its head instead of the Queen. Voluntary secession or forcible expulsion would settle the case of those Church of England ministers who refused compliance; and as to the great mass of Dissenters, they might quietly acquiesce in the change, if they did not go over; for there is no need to believe that the nation would become wholly or, indeed, generally Catholic. Rome might be dominant without being universal, hold the sway in Church and State, and yet not permeate the whole mass; accept submission and acquiescence without insisting on the sworn allegiance of conversion. In this or some similar way, for we have not the gift of prophecy, and can only forecast events from looking at present symptoms, a religious revolution might be effected in this country, analogous to one of those civil revolutions which have so often changed in a few years, or even months, the face of nations. But such a revolution as would turn this Protestant country into a Catholic one seems to you, perhaps, at present so improbable as to

be almost impossible. We can fully sympathise with you in this feeling, for we have thought so ourselves, and stoutly resisted the idea that in this enlightened, free country, the very home of liberty of speech and action, this Protestant England, the old, worn-out, effete, mediæval doctrines and practices of Rome could ever again lift up their head, much less flourish and prevail. That in a country where an open Bible is so widely circulated, if not diligently read; where the spirit of the age, so far from being superstitious, is the opposite, doubting rather than credulous; where men cannot endure any interference with their religious opinions; where a thread of slavery round the neck fires the blood; where to press religion upon a man against his will is almost sure to bring an angry word, if not a blow; that in a land which, of all others, seems most opposed to foreign influence and dictation, there should be such a thorough, complete, and radical change as Popery in its dominant form implies, seems to many an incredible event. But there are seasons when a nation seems given up to a temporary madness, when its very character is changed, and the most unexpected revolutions of thought and feeling, followed by instantaneous and intense action, rush through the land like an electric wave. It was so with the first French revolution, which, commencing at Paris, seemed to sweep through the land north, south, east, and west, like a tornado, and changed the loyal, quiet, dancing French peasant into a very demon of violence and cruelty. Now who can say that a revolution of thought, as intense, though of a different kind, may not sweep through our land, even if it be but as a gust of temporary insanity? We need not anticipate a permanent dominion; Rome is doomed, and therefore will not occupy a lasting throne. But she may for a short space—the prophetic three years and a-half, sit as a queen, and glorify herself and live deliciously. And this might be effected almost suddenly. It is surprising how nations, like mobs, are acted upon by sudden impulses, and in the fury of a moment, will do what in cooler moments they would shrink from with abhorrence. Lord George Gordon, in 1780, convulsed London at the head of an anti-Catholic mob! Who knows whether London might not witness, before 1880, an anti-Protestant mob? In 1829, Daniel O'Connell wrung from the Government of his day, those stout English Protestants, the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel, Catholic emancipation. Might not another Irish agitator, by similar arts and arms, wring, in 1869 or 1879, (but we fix no dates,) from the Government of that day, Catholic domination? And where are we to look for any strong opposition to such a measure? The middle classes, the grand strength of the nation, the chief deposit of power, seem at present sunk into a general apathy and indifference about religion. The vast expansion of trade and commerce, the speculative spirit of the day, the sudden reverses of fortune, the frauds and impostures in almost every branch of business, and the general laxity of principle so different from former times, seem to have corrupted the minds of that very class from which the most active and successful opposition might have been anticipated. In the time of Charles I. and of James II., London,

as the seat of commerce, as well as wealth and intelligence, headed the opposition made to tyranny and Popery. Would it be so now? Would the merchants, the bankers, the traders, unite as one man to resist Popery? Money, money, money seems to have absorbed all their thoughts, and as long as they can buy and sell, and get gain, it seems a matter of indifference to them what religion they are of, or anybody else, and whether it be Popery or Protestantism; if it do not touch the till, diminish the balance at the bank, impair credit, or injure business, it is of little consequence which religion has the upper hand. As to the masses, the labouring classes, we well know how lightly religion of any kind is held by them. They would neither favour nor resist any change. As long as it did not touch class interests, affect wages, or diminish employment, as long as it did not clash with their real or assumed wants or claims, Popery might as well be the religion of the state as any other form of religious worship, for all they would care.

We throw out these hints, which are rather more political than we could wish, in order to obviate an objection which we have felt ourselves to be very strong, viz., the improbability, if not the impossibility, of Rome ever re-asserting her ancient dominion in this country. But when God gives a people up to their own ways, removes the restraints which had kept back their enemies, and allows Satan to carry out his deep designs, there is no event, however improbable, which cannot easily take place.

But to return from this digression, as we are now showing the real nature and character of Popery, let us mention several other peculiar features which distinguish it from other systems.

1. Papal Rome manifests, then, an *inherent strength*, a tenacity of life for which few have given her credit. Most systems, whether political or religious, when they once decline go on to thorough and irreparable decay. They scarcely ever recover themselves, but sink lower and lower into weakness and decrepitude till they fall, never again to rise. But not so with Rome. She has recovered herself again and again from what seemed overwhelming defeats. Of this there are two signal instances, one in the 16th century, just after the Reformation under Luther had given her a deadly wound,* and the other after the first French Revolution. It would take too much space to show how, by means of the Inquisition and the Jesuits, she repaired the wound which Luther had made, and how she availed herself of the fall of Napoleon and the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty to recover the almost lost France. This remarkable power to recover lost ground, this continual renewal of her strength, this rising up to greater heights of power, just at the very time when she seemed ready to sink for ever, Roman Catholic writers delight to dwell upon, as affording, in their view, a fulfilment of the promise that, as being the Church of Christ, the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. Thus

* Ranke, a German historian, has written a most interesting account of this revival of Rome in the 16th century, a translation of which is published by Bohn in his "Classical Library," under the title of "History of the Popes, &c." by Leopold Ranke.

Bossuet, her most distinguished champion, says, "Rome is not exhausted in her old age, neither is the force of her voice extinct. Night and day she ceases not to send it forth among the most distant nations, and, behold! at that maternal voice, the extremities of the world are set in motion, and exhibit the will to give birth to a new Christianity that shall repair the ravages of those latter heresies."

Towards the close of the last century, Popery, indeed, was so swept away in France that all public worship ceased, and it was death to a priest to appear in the street. Yet now, though the educated classes are still utterly irreligious, and indeed infidel, yet the masses of the people in the rural districts are warmly attached to Catholicism, and almost wholly under the influence of the priests. It is impossible to doubt the energy and activity of the Papal party in this country, and that they are working night and day to advance their cause.

2. Another feature of Popery is no less remarkable—that it never *recedes from its position*, never abates one jot of its pretensions. It has assumed a position from which it may be driven, but from which it never of itself recedes. There is not a doctrine, nor a practice, nor a claim, which it has ever abandoned. It may, from policy, conceal and keep back such doctrines, for instance, as that no faith is to be kept with heretics, or that those who deny her doctrines or refuse her allegiance, may lawfully be punished with death. But she has never renounced any one point that she has ever authoritatively advanced. Indeed, she cannot possibly do so consistently with her creed, or her pretensions; for to acknowledge himself wrong in any one point of doctrine which has been decided by a former Pope or general council, would be for the vicar of Christ to renounce the infallibility of the Roman see. She can, therefore, never repent of any one doctrine advanced by authority, or of any one act similarly sanctioned. Can any one bring forward an instance of her repenting of the horrible deeds of the Inquisition, of the martyr fires of Smithfield, of the treacherous massacres of the Huguenots at Paris on the day of St. Bartholomew, of the cruelties of the Duke of Alva in the Netherlands, who boasted that he had delivered into the hands of the executioners eighteen thousand victims, besides the myriads who perished in the prisons, were slain in battle, or driven into exile? To repent of her deeds would be to acknowledge herself wrong, and to acknowledge herself wrong would destroy in a moment her infallibility. She has thus cut herself off from repentance, and has, so to speak, with her own hands, spun her own halter, and dug her own grave. Bad men like Ahab may repent; wicked cities like Nineveh may repent; but a church which claims to be infallible cannot repent, for to do so would be to destroy the very foundation on which she stands. There remains, therefore, nothing for Rome but to be destroyed when God maketh inquisition for blood; for, as impenitent to the last, when her time comes, she will, according to the sure word of prophecy, "be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." (Rev. xviii. 8.)

3. Another remarkable feature of Papal Rome is her *thorough*

unscrupulousness. She is utterly devoid both of conscience and scruple. It is said sometimes of corporate bodies that they have no conscience, and will do, in their collective capacity, deeds which each individual would shrink from doing personally. Thus Rome has neither conscience nor principle. The end with her sanctifies the means. Nothing can be wrong which advances the course and interest of holy church. Sin is not sin, perjury is not perjury, burning heretics at the stake is not cruelty, massacre is not murder, when her religion is thereby promoted. As in war, force or fraud, open or covert attacks, battles or stratagems are all allowable; so against heretics all arts and arms are warranted. If they can be won over, well; if they cannot be won, they must be forced; if they will not be forced, they must be destroyed, exterminated, burnt, made an end of.

But as we must not trespass any longer on this ground, though we hope to resume our subject in our next No., we shall conclude the present article with an extract from the learned work of David Clarkson,* in which he has proved every point that he has advanced from the writings of Roman canonists and divines by quoting their exact words as notes to his text:

“By this we may understand in what condition Protestants are by the laws of the Romish church, and how Papists are obliged to look upon us, and demean themselves towards us. No Protestant, from the prince to the meanest subject, has any title to lands, houses, money, or anything else which they possess, or can justly call it their own. All rules of righteousness which concern property, are void; Papists owe them no observance. In reference to us, we are not capable of injury upon this account; whatever they do against us in respect of our estates, they wrong us not, they sin not, for we have no title. If they take from us anything, or all we have, they steal not aught from us, they rob us not, because they take nothing from us that is our own. If they burn our houses over our heads, and fire towns and cities, (as they have done, and their famous Simanca says they may do,) they do us no injury, they sin not on this account, because the houses and goods consumed are none of ours. If they deprive a Protestant prince of his throne and dominions, they sin not; he is by their law and doctrine but a usurper, and had no just title to his crown. If they draw any of his subjects into war against him, at home or abroad, they do him no wrong, for they are not his subjects any more than the Popish clergy, who are sworn to another sovereign. Or if he entrust them with the commands of forts or garrisons, they may betray them to the Romanists, and not wrong him because they were not his. If they take all the place, or trust, or profit, from nobles or commons, they do them no wrong because they had no right to them, nor had the children after them any, for some generations. If they pay no debts to Protestants, though they were not only under the obligation of a promise, but of solemn oath, they may justify it, they owe them nothing. If trust be reposed in them, or anything be deposited in their hands, or they borrow anything of us, they may detain it; they need not restore it, for they have nothing of ours. In a word, there can be no Parliaments, or conventions of three estates of a nation, because there are none in that capacity. As there are no persons of honour for peers, all being infamous, so can there be no freeholders to choose, or to be chosen for the commons, since there are no proprietors. Thus, by the Popish principles, the foundations of the civil constitution in England, and other countries in like circumstances, are quite blown up, as if they had been at the mercy of a Faux. And those who will follow their conduct, must hold that we have no government, no king, no subjects, no parliaments, no laws, no liberties, no property, and, indeed, none of the rest, because not this last.”

* Published in Nichols' "Series of Puritan Divines."

HEART BREATHINGS.

“The friendship of the world is enmity with God. Whosoever, therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”—JAMES iv. 4.

O WHAT is earth? Yes, what is earth, which thousands so admire,
Which simple I once loved so dear, as nought else to admire?

No other aim, no thought beside,
But for to gain her as my bride.
I thought my joy would be complete,
If by my side she took her seat.

I loved her works, I loved her ways, I loved her very dust;
Devoutly did I worship her, and place in her my trust.

But well for me that she did scorn the offer of my heart;
Yes, well for me that I from her was forced to depart.

I've seen since then the end of those
Who on her promises repose.
Ten thousand griefs I would prefer,
Than live and die like them and her;

From all that's good as far removed as south is from the north.
They sink, they sink, o'erwhelm'd beneath the flood of God's just
wrath.

She is a vain, deceitful friend, and doomed to the fire;
Her frowns can never injure me; her smiles I don't desire.

A seat of war, a land of strife;
Her children live a dying life;
A wretched home; and, what is worst,
She is by her Creator cursed.

Yet how she flatters and ensnares the sons of Adam's race,
And often gains the hearts of those who're called by God's grace.

She decks her head, she paints her face, and walks with pleasing air;
With landscape views and pleasure parks, religion, too, so fair.

But I have seen, and know right well,
Her pleasures soon will end in hell,
Her zealous-toiling lovers all,
Into the pit will surely fall.

They'll prove, too late, those words are truth, which now seem empty
sound;

When, guilty and defenceless, at God's righteous bar they're found.

E'en moral Virtue's choicest flowers are almost choked with weeds;
Nought less than God's omnipotence can still preserve their seeds.

The guilty breast and dark recess
Cannot conceal the truth of this;
That things are not good as they look,
The Judge will prove from his great book.

No charming sounds of music sweet will then attract the ear;
The heart will be with anguish rent, the soul with guilt and fear.

Like Abram, when I turn'd my back to go, I knew not where,
I did not dare return again, when almost in despair.

I fear'd the just, the dreadful doom
Of those who love earth as their home.
The further from her that I went,
The less cause had I to repent.

Riches, honour, glory, virtue, peace, righteousness, and love
Attend me in the lonely path, and heaven awaits above.

Lord, let me never cleave again to that polluted spot;
And all my heart's base wanderings there, do thou remember not.

O let my soul cleave close to thee,
And often thy sweet beauties see;
My only Lover, only Friend,
Whose love can never, never end.

In thy dear footprints would I tread, and share thy sufferings here;
That with thy saints, at thy right hand, in heaven I may appear.

O heavenly Wisdom! Sister dear, my soul now cleaves to thee;
Thou fairest One that eyes have seen, or eyes will ever see.

I fear no foes, I dread no ills,
Nor death itself my fervour chills,
When with thy presence I am blest,
Or at thy feet lay down to rest.

The rugged way, the prisoner's fare, the fiery furnace, too;
The lion's den, the swelling flood, I cheerfully go through.

"No will but thine, no will but thine," is all I have to say;

"Thy will be done, thy will be done," is all I have to pray.

Thy teachings yield such blessed peace,
Make faith, and hope, and love increase;
And painful as they e'er may be,
O may I never from them flee.

Like clay that's in the potter's hand, so may I be with thee;
The Alpha and Omega thou; the empty vessel, me.

THE ETHIOPIAN.

THIS IS MY BELOVED, AND THIS IS MY FRIEND.

My dear Friends,—I have just sat down to drop you a few lines, to inform you of the Lord's gracious protection and goodness, to one so unworthy, which he has bestowed in giving me journeying mercies. But that, my friend, is not all. He has been faithful again to his word of promise, for he has said to me, at times, when I have been going from home, that portion which the Lord spake to Jacob. Once, in particular, I was going to London, and it rested with me the whole of the time I was from home: "I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest." (Gen. xxviii. 15.) And so I have found it to the present moment.

Really, my friend, I don't know how to feel thankful enough to the Lord for all his favours bestowed upon such a wretch as I feel myself to be, knowing that if he were to cast me off, he would be just in so doing. O what a merciful and gracious God he is! To this I can truly set my seal, from my heart, with the psalmist, that he is "slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide; neither will he keep his anger for ever." This is our mercy: "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." O what are all the perishing things of time and sense, compared with what the blessed Spirit says by Paul, Col. iii. 1—4. I do wish I could have my mind, heart, and soul more set on those things above, where Christ is, looking unto him by the eye of faith, who is the Author and Finisher of faith. This.

is my soul's desire; and this, I can say, that the words of his mouth are most sweet to my poor and needy soul; "yea, he is altogether lovely." "This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend." Yes, one who loves at all times, even when we need him most; not like an earthly friend or brother; but he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Though we change often in our feelings, there is no change in him. This shows us what poor frail creatures we are, and that he is a just, holy, and righteous God, pardoning iniquities, transgressions, and sins, and will by no means clear the guilty, but in and through the blood and righteousness of a precious Jesus. In him there is true life, love, and power, made manifest by the blessed Spirit's applying it to the poor, tried, tempted, and needy soul. Such souls, feeling their sins to be a plague to them, "have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Such are encouraged to come boldly unto the throne of grace, that they may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Bless his precious name, he will ever hear the cry of the poor and needy, and will not turn a deaf ear to their cry, though ever so weak and feeble; no not even a sigh or a groan, from a feeling heart, will he despise, for he first put it there, or it could not have entered our hard hearts. Job says, "God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me." My heart and soul's desire is to be resigned and submissive to his will in all things, and to be led and taught by him, knowing that he is the best teacher, and that he cannot err.

I stayed two nights in London. I heard Mr. A. on Monday, but not with any feeling. On Tuesday, at Eden-street, I heard Mr. G., and I must say that I got on better with him. He came more to what my soul loves. I must say again I have been highly favoured of the Lord, and have proved once more that all my times are in his hand, whether for hearing, reading, or prayer. But what a mercy to have longing desires and hungerings after the bread and water of everlasting life, and to be made partakers of them. This is an unspeakable mercy and blessing indeed. So I have found it, especially in my visit with you this time; and the Lord has favoured me with a soft melting down since I have been home, which will not soon be forgotten. Truly I can say that "the Lord is good."

May the Lord be with you and stand by you, and always give you a word in season to speak to those living souls that gather together to hear what the Lord shall say to them by you, as the instrument in his hands to the comforting of their tried, tempted, and cast down souls; in strengthening the weak hands and confirming the feeble knees; for I do believe you have many living souls amongst you. The Lord bless you in your own soul.

Give my kind love to Mrs. G., and all the friends who love a precious Jesus in sincerity and truth.

I arrived safe home on Wednesday afternoon. My visit, I do believe, will be long remembered by me, if spared to stay long in.

this vale of tears. It was 51 years that very day that I first drew breath in this waste howling wilderness. I find that it is polluted, and contaminated with sin; but I feel that it is not my rest, that I have a good hope through grace of a better hereafter, though unworthy of such a blessing. Truly I did feel that love kindled afresh in my heart and soul to him who has kept and preserved me these many years by his almighty power and grace before I knew anything of these things that my soul loveth, or had any love or desire after him. It is his own free gift and mercy alone to such wretches as you and I. Though I have many changes and fears, yet the Lord is my strength and stay in all my weakness, and my hope and trust in every time of trouble. So I have found him. The 11th Hymn has been very sweet and precious to my soul many times.

The Lord bless you, with the best of blessings, for he addeth no sorrow therewith. Yours affectionately,
Standard Road, Faversham, G. BROADBRIDGE.
Nov. 30th, 1849.

TRAITS OF EXPERIENCE.

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”—1 Cor. xii. 13.

THE saints of God, in every age,
Whatever be their place or stage,
Are of one Spirit with their Lord,
And love the same sweet gospel word.

Differ they may in lesser things,
(As subjects differ much from kings,) /
But here they all resemblance bear,
All of them of one spirit are.

Some are young lambs, and others sheep;
Some can rejoice, while others weep;
Some hunger, thirst, and crave and long,
While others sing salvation's song.

Some know but little of their Lord,
Yet love to hear the gospel word;
These watch and wait at wisdom's door,
Where God relieves his praying poor.

Some are with tokens often blest,
And seek and find the gospel rest;
While others scarcely dare to say,
They know they're in the good old way.

But here they every one agree,—
Each longs to say, “Christ died for me.”
And often to the Lord they sigh,
That they may “Abba, Father,” cry.

A. H.

WHEN a believer is in a state of comfort and prosperity, he can read other books beside the Bible; but when he is in temptation, or burdened with distress, he betakes himself to the Bible alone. He wants pure wine without the mixture of water. This shows the worth of the Bible above all other books.—*Toplady*.

MEDITATIONS ON VARIOUS IMPORTANT POINTS OF OUR MOST HOLY FAITH.

I.

THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL.

(Continued from page 189.)

WE hope that we shall not weary our readers by dwelling at so great a length on the subject now before us. We would gladly indeed bring our "Meditations on the Ministry of the Gospel" into a shorter compass, but two things much hinder the fulfilment of this desire: 1st, the wide extent and deep importance of the subject itself, which will therefore hardly admit of a brief and superficial treatment; 2dly, the character of our own mind, which cannot be satisfied except by entering thoroughly into every point of divine truth which presents itself to our view, so as not only fully to understand it ourselves, but to endeavour that our readers should fully understand it also. But to do this properly, space is required; and this, when readers are not deeply interested in the subject, or do not see the importance of the various points brought before them, often appears unnecessarily prolix. Bear with us, then, kind readers, if we seem to protract our subject to any undue degree of wearisome length. Writers, like preachers, are not often fair and impartial judges of the length of their own compositions; and not being weary themselves, can hardly think that they may weary their readers. We will do our best to condense our thoughts and avoid undue prolixity, but we cannot promise any such brevity as would impair the completeness of the subject, or leave any point obscure. But if, in our anxiety to do this, we should be a little, or more than a little tedious, you have this remedy against us, which you have not against the preacher,—that you can read as much or as little as you like, and when and where you like, and are not tied to your seat till we have bestowed all our tediousness upon you.

Following, then, the order laid down by us in our March No., (page 83,) the next point for our consideration is,

III. The ends for which the ministry of the gospel was established.

These ends we may conveniently divide into two: 1. *Ultimate*, and 2. *Proximate*. Let us explain the difference between them. An *ultimate* end is that for the sake of which anything is undertaken. A *proximate* end is that which, though not the primary object of the undertaking, yet is obtained at the same time in an intermediate way. Take the following illustration of the difference between them. In desiring to preach the gospel, the chief or ultimate end of one on whose mind the work of the ministry was laid would be the glory of God. To exalt, magnify, and set him on high who had done so great things for his soul would be his highest aim and object, and would be therefore his *ultimate* end. But seeing the misery of those who have no hope, and are without God in the world, or feeling an ardent love to the suffering saints of God, he

might desire also to preach the gospel that he might be an instrument of good to the souls of men. This would be a *proximate* or intermediate end, as the glory of God would be his ultimate or final end. These two ends generally meet together in the breast of every servant of God, and their fulfilment crowns his ministry. He might have very little success in the work, and yet find his happiness in the glory of God. But if his ministry were blessed, it would much increase his joy. We have a beautiful example of this in the words of our great Exemplar, the blessed Lord himself, as prophetically addressed to his heavenly Father, when, foreseeing his rejection by the literal Israel, he thus rested in God: "Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain; yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God." (Isa. xlix. 4.) But the Father not only accepted his work, as done for his glory, but gave him, as his reward, to become a light to lighten the Gentiles, that he might be his salvation unto the ends of the earth. This simple illustration may give us a key to the ends for which the ministry of the gospel was established. They are, as we have already said, ultimate and proximate. The ultimate end was the glory of God; the proximate end was the benefit and blessing of the church. We will consider these two ends separately; and first the *ultimate* end.

That all God's counsels, all his ways, and all his works in creation, in providence, and in grace, are for the display of his own glory is a truth so firmly established in every believer's heart that it is scarcely necessary to bring forward on its behalf, as might be easily done, any great amount of Scripture proof. And yet a few testimonies may be desirable, as we never wish to advance any point without a "Thus saith the Lord" to establish it on a scriptural basis. Let it suffice, then, to quote two testimonies from the Old Testament and two from the New. Speaking to Pharaoh, God said: "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." (Ex. ix. 16.) Why was this mighty king raised up and suffered to oppress the people of God? That the name of God might be declared—that is, glorified, in all the earth. And what said the Lord to Moses when he interceded for rebellious Israel? "And the Lord said, I have pardoned, according to thy word; but as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." (Num. xiv. 20, 21.) Whether, then, Pharaoh was hardened, or Israel forgiven, the glory of God was the ultimate end of each. Now hear Paul's testimony as regards the dispensation of his grace, and see how the glory of God and the good pleasure of his will is the ultimate end of his predestinating purposes: "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. i. 5, 6.) And again: "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will;

that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." (Eph. i. 11, 12.)

But the exaltation of his dear Son is so intimately connected with, so wrapped up and involved in the display of this glory of God that the ministry of the gospel can have for its ultimate end nothing less than the setting of the crown on the head of Jesus. On his head are many crowns, (Rev. xix. 12,) and he deserves and will ever wear them all. But the crown which belongs to him as the Redeemer of the church by his own blood is the crown of crowns. Now, that to set this crown upon his head is the great, the ultimate end of the ministry of the gospel none will deny who know what the gospel is; and cold and dead must be the heart which beats in a minister's bosom, which does not feel that the glory of Jesus is his highest aim and best reward. It is beautiful to see the union between the glory of God and the exaltation of his dear Son. This is the decree which secures and harmonises both: "I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." (Ps. ii. 6.) And then follows the promise: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (Ps. ii. 8.) So in that memorable prayer, (John xvii,) our Lord said to his heavenly Father, "Glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee;" and again: "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John xvii. 4, 5.) Similarly he prayed, on a previous occasion, "Father, glorify thy name." And what an immediate answer! "Then came there a voice from heaven saying, I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." (John xii. 28.)

But we shall not dwell on these points, as their consideration would take us too far afield, and shall, therefore, come at once to the proximate or intermediate ends, for which the ministry of the gospel was established,—the *benefit and blessing of the church of God*. Yet we cannot forbear dwelling for a few moments on the blessed union of these two ends. As the glory of God, and the exaltation of his dear Son unite and harmonise, so is there a union and a harmony between the ultimate and proximate ends for which the ministry of the gospel was established. We showed in our illustration of the work of the ministry, as laid on a man's heart, the union of two ends, the ultimate and the proximate, the glory of God and the good of souls. But in a much higher sense do the ultimate and proximate ends for which the ministry of the gospel was established meet and harmonise in the bosom of God. The union of these two ends, the blessed harmony which subsists between them, is even now, as realised by faith, a subject of thankful adoration, and will hereafter, when fully developed, be an eternal source of unutterable joy and praise. That God should establish his glory in the very heavens by taking into his blissful presence an innumerable multitude of redeemed sinners; that his highest justice and deepest mercy, his ineffable holiness and surpassing grace should meet in the Person and work of his dear Son, and issue in the everlasting salvation of

millions of sinners, sunk as low as sin and Satan combined could sink them; O, the depths of wisdom, love, and power, displayed in this mystery of godliness! That God should be glorified, as it is the ultimate end of all his ways and works, as it was the end which our gracious Lord had ever before his eyes when here below, so it is the delight and joy of heaven. Compared with this, redemption itself sinks into insignificance. Better that all should perish, better that earth with all its multitudes should sink for ever into the bottomless pit, than that the glory of God should receive a tarnish or a stain. But that the salvation of the redeemed should redound to the glory of God; that there should be so blessed a union, so thorough and perfect a harmony between the glory of God and the salvation of sinners through the blood and righteousness of his dear Son; that, as he said to Moses when he revealed to him his glory, it was to “keep mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; this will make the eternal anthem swell its highest notes of praise; this will be the highest joy of those who will see him as he is, without a veil between.

We come now, then, to the *proximate* or intermediate end, for which the ministry of the gospel was established—the *benefit and blessing* of the *church of God*.

This point is clearly and beautifully set forth in various parts of the Epistles of the New Testament, especially in what are called the pastoral Epistles, viz., those to Timothy and that to Titus. The counsels and exhortations given by the apostle to these two servants of Christ, form and embody a complete code of ministerial instruction, and should be pondered over, and attended to, by every minister who desires to know the will of God and do it. But we think that in no part of the New Testament are the ends for which the ministry was established so fully and clearly laid down as in Eph. iv. 8–16. We shall, therefore, chiefly confine ourselves to the opening of this portion of the word of truth.

Our blessed Lord in his last interview with his disciples, “commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” (Acts i. 5.) This gift of the Holy Ghost we have already shown (March No., p. 87) was necessary to make the ministry a living word to the souls of men. But the blessed Spirit thus given came down in diversities of gifts: “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.” (Eph. iv. 11.) But though the gifts were different, yet the end was the same: “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” (Eph. iv. 12.) Three ends are here named. Let us examine them.

i. The first is “for the perfecting of the saints.” But before we enter upon this point it may be as well to define the meaning of both terms. What is meant, then, by “the saints?” Undoubtedly those who are “sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus

Christ, and called;" (Jude 1;) who "by the will of God are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all;" (Heb. x. 10;) in a word, the members of the mystical body of Christ, "chosen in him before the foundation of the world that they should be holy and without blame before him in love." (Eph. i. 4.) By the word "perfecting" we may understand several things, but chiefly everything which relates to the calling, gathering in, and promoting the spiritual benefit of these members of the body of Christ. We will look at some of these benefits and blessings.

The word translated "perfecting" means making a thing ready, putting it fully in order, and rendering it complete. It is so used of creation: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." (Heb. xi. 3.) It is, therefore, applied to the sacred body of Jesus in the words, "a body hast thou prepared me," *margin*, "fitted." (Heb. x. 5.) So, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise;" (Matt. xxi. 16;) in the Hebrew, "*founded*." From this idea of preparing or framing, preparing in the mind, and forming by actual operation, comes that of *putting together*, so as to make a perfect and complete whole. We, therefore, find the word used as expressive of union of heart and judgment: "That ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. i. 10.) Thence springs a further idea of *growth* and *development* in beauty and completeness: "*make you perfect*;" (1 Pet. v. 10;) "*make you perfect in every good work*." (Heb. xiii. 21.) Let us see whether we have now gained any clearer idea as to the meaning of the expression, "the perfecting of the saints." Take these three meanings into your consideration: 1, that of framing, which is chiefly done by putting things together; 2, so putting them together that they may fit in well with each other; 3, so fitting together that, with this original framing and neat junction of the various parts, there may be a gradual growth and development of the whole into such perfection as it is susceptible of. To gather suitable materials; to put these materials neatly and nicely together; and to keep adding stone to stone and layer to layer, till the whole building be complete in all its parts,—to do these three things thoroughly and well is "the perfecting of the saints."

Let us consider these three things somewhat more closely, as it may throw light upon the ends for which the ministry of the gospel was established.

1. The first step is the *gathering of suitable materials*. These are already prepared in the mind of God, yea, prepared before the foundation of the world. Paul, therefore, says: "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." (Rom. ix. 23.) But they are to be gathered, and usually one by one. (Isa. xxvii. 12.) The stones are still in the quarry of nature, and have to be gathered out thence that they may be "as corner stones polished after the similitude of a palace." The ministry of the gospel is God's appointed means of gathering these stones out. What a wonderful proof of this was afforded on the day of Pentecost, when under one sermon three

thousand were not merely pricked, but pierced (as the word literally means, and should have been translated) in their heart, and thus quickened into life, and called out of darkness into God's marvellous light. How clearly also this part of the work of the ministry was given to Paul in that memorable commission spoken to his inmost soul by the Lord himself, when he appeared to him in majesty and glory at Damascus gate: "But rise, and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." (Acts xxvi. 16-18.) If proof were needed of the fulfilment of this commission to the very letter, and of the power of the ministry of the gospel to call sinners to repentance, we need only follow Paul from city to city, and from country to country, and see how almost everywhere the vilest and worst of sinners, sinners such as he so graphically describes 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, were by the words of his lips turned from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven. God, indeed, may work upon a sinner's conscience without the direct application of the word; (1 Pet. iii. 1;) but his usual way is to call sinners by it, and especially by it as preached by his servants. Peter, therefore, says: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." (1 Pet. i. 23.) And similar is the testimony of James: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." (James i. 18.)

We have, indeed, to lament that in our day there is so little of this conversion work going on, so few striking instances of the power of the preached word on the hearts of sinners, as we read of in the days of Bunyan, Whitefield, Huntington, &c. Nothing, indeed, more plainly shows the poverty and barrenness of the ministry of our day than the feebleness of its effects. We do not altogether lack men of truth, though from deaths and infirmities their number seems sadly diminishing; the gospel is preached with greater or less degree of clearness and faithfulness in various parts of the land; there is a spirit of hearing in many places, and a manifest hungering for a more powerful gospel, and more richly and ably furnished ministers; and yet, alas! judging from the effects, how rarely does it seem, as in days of old, preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

2. But now comes the second meaning, which we have pointed out as a part of "the perfecting of the saints." This we said was the *fitting* or *joining* of the stones, when gathered, *neatly and nicely together*. How then is this accomplished by the ministry of the gospel? Thus. As the Lord the Spirit makes it the power of God unto salvation; as by it faith is given, for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing

by the word of God," as Christ is revealed unto and embraced by faith thus given, and this faith works by love, a union is produced in the soul of the hearer thus blessed to the dear family of God. Thus, as the ministry first gathers out the stones, and, as we shall presently show, hacks and hews them into right form and shape, so it also brings together the living stones thus gathered and thus prepared, and unites them to the other living stones, and thus, as Peter speaks, they "are built up a spiritual house."

This is a very essential part of the ministry of the word, and is intimately connected with the spiritual blessings which the gospel holds out and instrumentally communicates. The two works are distinct, as distinct in the ministry as calling and deliverance in the soul of the hearer. Some of God's servants are more blessed in the first work, the calling of sinners, the quickening of them into divine life, the first gathering of the stones. Others are more blessed to the deliverance of souls in guilt and bondage. But both are parts of the ministry of the gospel. Paul planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. And yet he that planted and he that watered were one; for both were labourers together with God. (1 Cor. iii. 6-9.) So in the building of the spiritual house. Before the stones can be nicely fitted into the building, they have not only to be hewed out of the quarry, but cut and squared, the rough corners and angles chipped off, so as not to be mere rubble, or like the stones that we see in the rough stone walls of some of our counties, thrust in anyhow just as they are picked up out of the pit, the work of a farm labourer, not of a mason. There is, therefore, often a long interval between the first gathering and the nicely fitting; for these stones are not fit to be put into the spiritual building in their rough, un-hewn state.

But besides all this hacking and hewing, ("I have hewed them by the prophets," Hos. vi. 5.) squaring and paring, levelling and beveling, something else is needed of special and divine communication to make the stones neatly and nicely fit; for without this there will be rents in the building, unsightly gaps, and anything but that which shows the master's hand. A man may be gathered for some considerable time, many are so for years, before he is so far humbled and broken in spirit, his pride, prejudice, and self-righteousness, these rough corners, chipped off, or his soul so fully blessed and delivered as to be fully united in heart and spirit to the living family of God. He may love their company, and esteem them the excellent of the earth; but through doubt and fear, darkness, guilt, and bondage, not be united to them in the full feelings of his soul, or in church fellowship, as in the case of our gospel churches. He feels himself, perhaps, to be a poor isolated being, spoiled for the world, yet unfit for the church; a kind of spiritual nondescript, with sufficient light in his mind and life in his conscience to bring and keep him out of the world, to make him sit at Zion's gates, listen, eagerly listen, to the preached word, but not blessed with that sweet assurance of faith whereby he can take hold of the blessings of the gospel as his own, or unite himself to the family of God without fear or bondage.

Now a large and important end of the ministry of the gospel is for the very purpose of delivering, comforting, and blessing such tried and exercised souls. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people;" "Strengthen ye the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees; say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not;" "Cast up, cast up the highway, gather out the stones, lift up a standard for the people;" these are some of the special charges given to the servants of God for the perfecting of the saints. But there is "a set time to favour Zion;" and when this set time comes to favour a poor soul in guilt and bondage, when the word is blessed to his deliverance, and pardon and peace are revealed and sealed on his conscience, he is then not only gathered, hacked, hewed, chipped, squared, and levelled, but so moulded into a felt sense of the love of God and his dear people, so beautifully and blessedly fitted for the fellowship of the saints, that he is constrained by every sweet constraint to be visibly and openly one with them and of them. He feels he cannot be happy unless he unite himself to the living family of God; and they, when they hear the good news, are as glad to receive him as he is to be received.

To this part of the ministry, therefore, belongs the uniting of the living stones into church fellowship. This was the invariable practice of the apostles. They did not leave the stones gathered by their preaching to lie about by themselves anywhere and everywhere, as must be the case where there is no church formed, and the ordinances of God's house are neglected. In such a congregation there may be a living ministry, and living stones gathered by that ministry; but where is the spiritual house, where the church as in the days of the apostles? Where is there church discipline and gospel order, or any visible fellowship of the saints? It is true there may be the visible form of a church without spiritual fellowship among the members; and seeing this has sometimes repelled godly people from joining any church, and made them prefer their present state of isolation. But the abuse of a thing does not overthrow its use, nor are we to reject church fellowship because in many cases it is but a fellowship in name and appearance. One thing is undeniable, that the apostles instituted churches, and that the same day of Pentecost which witnessed the gathering of the stones, the three thousand first converts, witnessed also the ordinance of baptism and the formation of a gospel church: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts ii. 41, 42.) Here we have, most undeniably, a gospel church; for we read: "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts ii. 47.) We have thus presented to our view, set up by the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, a gospel church, in which were administered the two standing ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, the latter called the "breaking of bread." With this church the apostles had fellowship and communion, both with each other and the members; for we read that those who were

thus called and baptized “continued steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine and fellowship.” Blessed doctrine! for Christ, a crucified and a risen Christ, was its sum and substance; and blessed fellowship when “the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul.” How beautifully and how blessedly were the living stones then fitted together; for they were all baptized into one body by the power and indwelling of the Holy Ghost, as they were united in church fellowship by the ordinances of God’s house. No error then tainted the purity of their doctrine, no division marred the closeness of their fellowship; and for a short space the church “looked forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.” (Song vi. 10.) Here, under the preaching of the apostles and the pouring out of the Holy Ghost, we have the brightest example and clearest pattern of what the ministry of the gospel can do for “the perfecting of the saints,” both in effectually calling or gathering, and in building them together in spiritual union and communion inwardly, and in church fellowship outwardly.

3. And now comes the third meaning which we attached to the expression, “the perfecting of the saints,”—the contributing to the *growth, increase, and development* of the people of God when thus brought together. We shall not dwell long upon this point, though one of great importance, for two reasons: 1. Because we will not encroach at present too much on our pages; 2. Because this peculiar feature of the ministry will come more fully under our consideration when we have to open the verses which immediately follow the passage which we are now attempting to explain.

“Perfection,” as used in the New Testament, is often misunderstood. Wesley’s doctrine of perfection has much obscured its scriptural meaning, and that in two almost opposite ways: 1. By persuading his ignorant followers that there is such an attainment as perfection in the flesh; and, 2. By prejudicing his opponents against the word itself, as being by him so grossly perverted. There is a remarkable tendency to ignore or quietly drop words which have been perverted to false meanings, and this from a jealous fear lest we should be suspected of holding erroneous sentiments if we made use of them. Thus the words “holy” and “holiness,” as applied to a Christian walk, have been almost dropped in many pulpits, for fear lest their use should be suspected of encouraging progressive or fleshly sanctification. So the words “perfect” and “perfection” have dropped out of the established Calvinistic pulpit vocabulary, much through Wesley’s perversion of their meaning. But it is a scriptural term, and, therefore, has a sense fully harmonizing with the analogy of faith and the grand doctrines of the gospel. We have often thought that there is one passage in particular which clearly explains what the New Testament means by perfection. It occurs Heb. v. 14: “But strong meat belongeth to them that are of *full age*,” (*margin*, “perfect.”) Perfection, then, according to the Scripture, does not mean absolute moral perfection, a freedom from the corruption of our nature; a thorough purity of heart, lip, and life;

but, as distinguished from a state of spiritual childhood, a Christian ripeness, a full maturity of judgment, a capability of feeding upon and digesting strong meat; a having the senses, by reason of use and experience, exercised to discern both good and evil. A man fully grown, a mind well matured, a house completely built, a tree arrived to its full size and fruitfulness, are not perfect absolutely, but they are perfect relatively. The man will be no stronger, the mind no riper, the house not more finished, the tree not larger or more productive. This is the scriptural idea of perfection, implying, not a freedom from sin or infirmity, but a freedom from childish ignorance, weakness, indecision, and instability.

As, then, the ministry is for "the perfecting of the saints," it is the appointed instrument of communicating that sound instruction, that ripened and matured wisdom, that firm stability, that clear judgment, that steadiness of mind, that decision in general character and action which distinguishes the man from the child. To produce this perfection, to be an instrument in the hands of the blessed Spirit thus to mature, ripen, and establish the saints of God, and build them up on their most holy faith, is a most important end of the ministry. What a blessing to a church, and especially to the older and more experienced members, is a sound, faithful, experimental ministry, a ministry of exercised, solid, weighty, established men, not of youths and novices. A church preached to by youths and ruled by women falls under that sentence: "As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them." And what is the consequence? "O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths" (Isa. iii. 12.) But what with the prevalent system of supplies, what with the lack of able, experienced, and faithful pastors, and what with the low state of things generally in the churches, we have lost almost the very idea of a sound, experienced, weighty, established ministry; and can now only faintly realise it by reading the writings of such men as Bunyan, Owen, Huntington, Bourne's Letters, &c.; and thus finding and feeling, from the weight and power of the words of such men, what a blessing it would be to sit under such a ministry; of course, not so gifted, for that would be desiring too much; but approaching it in its stability, and the weight of its instruction, guidance, consolation, and general edification.

But as this part of our subject will again come before us, we must defer its fuller consideration to a future No.

THE covenant of grace. If anything ought to be accounted worthy of the most attentive consideration, it is indeed the covenant of grace. Here a way is shown unto a better paradise than the earthly, and to a more certain and more stable happiness than that from which Adam fell. Here new hopes shine upon ruined mortals, which by so much ought to be the more acceptable, by how much it came more unexpected. Here are conditions to which eternal life is annexed, conditions not again by us to be performed, which would cause the mind to despond; but by Him who departed not this life before he had truly said, "It is finished."—*Witsius*.

Obituary.

MRS. DRAPER.

MRS. DRAPER, widow of the late Wm. Draper, whose obituary was inserted in the "Standard" of August, 1862, was born in Essex, in the year 1785. In 1801 she came to London, and being among professors, she imbibed their principles; but in 1802 she was taken by her uncles, the late esteemed Wm. and James Abbott, to hear that beloved servant of the Lord, Wm. Huntington; and under the first sermon, the Lord was pleased to pull down all her false profession, and make her feel her lost and undone estate. She remained in great distress for about nine months, when the Lord was pleased to deliver her in a most particular manner, under a sermon preached by Mr. H. from: "What man intending to build sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, lest, after he begin to build, he be not able to finish?" In this discourse, Mr. H. treated much upon the building of mercy. As the church is "like the tower of David," he spoke of the wind, the floods and the rain descending upon the awakened soul, destroying all false refuges, and causing us to dig deep that our foundations may be upon the rock. The Lord so blessed this discourse to her that she was quite overcome with a sense of his pardoning love, and truly believed she was on the Rock.

This comfort lasted for nearly a month, and every discourse added more to her joy, for she said she could converse with God as a friend, having a sweet sense of the dying love of the Lord Jesus Christ in her heart, and the soul-satisfying witness of the Spirit; but she soon found that there was something more than joy and comfort in the path to heaven. She was taken very ill, and not expected to live, and, what was worse than all to her, the Lord had hid his face and left her for awhile, as he did Hezekiah. She found much confusion and darkness. Satan made a sharp attack, and her unbelief made her to say, "I shall see man no more, with the inhabitants of the earth, nor God in the land of the living;" but before she had been so two days, the Lord spoke these words to her soul: "As thy day, so shall thy strength be." These words brought light and gladness to her soul, Satan and unbelief gave way, and sweet communion and resignation took place. She enjoyed very much a discourse Mr. H. preached from these words: "He was taken from prison and from judgment."

She was 16 years and a few months old, when Mr. H. preached the first sermon she heard, and 17 when he preached the one under which the Lord was pleased to deliver her. Mr. H., after hearing the account of the way in which the Lord had delivered her, received her into his church with great affection, saying, "Well, my dear, as ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." She continued under his ministry until his death; after which the Lord, in his providence, removed her with her husband, a most gracious man, to Oxford. She remained there for eight years, and then returned to London. After her return, she settled under Mr.

Burrell's ministry, and lastly Mr. Thaine's, but for the last four or five years, was quite confined at home from rheumatism, most part of the time unable to remove from her chair; but the Lord wonderfully sustained her, both spiritually and temporally. Her time was chiefly spent in reading the Bible, Hart's Hymns, and Huntington's works, which were very precious to her.

I will here insert a letter to an esteemed friend, with some papers which she dictated for her grandson to write:

"One evening, being exceedingly ill in body and low in mind, earnestly entreating the Lord for a fresh token of the manifestation of his love, these words came with power to my mind: 'When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you.' Instantly a sweet light shone on all the way the Lord had brought me, and many sweet promises he had made to me formerly shone with fresh light and power; so that my soul was overwhelmed with peace and joy. Afterwards, as I was lying on the sofa, I dreamed I was walking in a large green field, and saw the sun rising more beautiful than ever I had seen it before. Instantly I had such a sight of Christ as the Sun of righteousness that I broke out singing:

" 'Thou glorious Sun of Righteousness,
For ever on me shine;
Whilst travelling through this wilderness,
Assure my heart thou'rt mine.'

And singing them over a great many times, and very loud, I awoke."

1844

"My dear friend,—I have now been confined to my room one year and eight months, with the exception of going out in a cab twice last summer; but the Lord has wonderfully supported me, and frequently comforted me with a sense of his love and presence. Nevertheless, it has been a trying winter to me, not being able to move from one chair to another without much pain and difficulty. It sometimes seems a lonely life, my friends being most of them taken away by death, and others have slighted me; but one day being more grieved and disconsolate than usual, I asked the Lord how these things could be; and all at once my eyes were directed to the Saviour, and I said in my heart, 'Wilt thou forsake me?' He answered me, 'I have graven thee on the palms of my hands.' I burst into tears and answered, 'That is enough, Lord; that is enough. If my name is in the print of the nails, thou canst not forget me, and wilt not forsake me.' Immediately these words came to my mind:

" 'My name from the palms of thy hands,
Eternity will not erase!'

But O, my dear friend, the thought of the eternal Almighty Jehovah answering a poor creature in such a sweet manner, caused such feeling as I cannot describe; but such is the condescension of our dear Redeemer. May it encourage you to be frequent in mental prayer; for I have had many sweet answers that way.

"Shortly after this, I was taken ill of bronchitis, as you have heard; and after suffering two or three weeks with that, I caught a fresh cold, and what the doctor termed influenza came on; when the weakness of my body and the power of the disease so overcame me that I could neither read, think, or take any notice of anything about me; but my heart was now and then lifted up to the Lord, when I found sweet peace and quietness within; and after a few days it pleased the Lord to renew my mind, and the word of God flowed sweetly into my heart, and love, joy, praise, and gratitude sprang up. Then I could read, sing, pray, and praise without a book. This lasted for several days. As I lay in my bed, I was thinking what a mercy it was that the enemy had not been permitted to tempt or harass me all through my illness; then it seemed as though spoken to me: 'The Lion of the tribe of Judah has chained the lion in the bottomless pit and shut his jaws.' I cannot

express the power and majesty I saw in those words, 'The Lion of the tribe of Judah.' And is not our dear Redeemer King of kings and Lord of lords, holding all things by the word of his power?

"As my strength increased, my consolations abated; but the Lord is the same, and his covenant will stand fast for ever. I have been 60 years now tossed on a sea of trouble, afflictions, temptations, bereavements, and sorrow, mixed with mercies, comforts, consolations, and numberless tokens of the Lord's everlasting love to my soul. The pilot is Jehovah, the vessel is his own, and no doubt he will land it safe at his desired haven.

"O may he keep us in his fear and love to the end, and he shall have all the glory.

"Yours sincerely,

"R. DRAPER."

"1862.

"A few thoughts and feelings on my 77th birthday, April 2nd, 1862.—All at once this morning it came into my mind, 'This is my birthday.' I said in my heart, 'What was I born for? What have I been spared for all these years,—a poor, helpless, worthless creature like me?' When something answered, 'To prove the faithfulness of God, and be saved at last.' Immediately my heart melted with gratitude, and I said, 'O my dear Redeemer, didst thou really bear 77 years of my sins on the cross, and put them away for ever? And am I really washed in thy blood, and sanctified by thy Spirit? Thou didst reveal thy love and mercy when I was but 17 years of age, and now I am 77. It is just the same free salvation. Thou hast brought me through many fires and waters, but not one grain of thy grace is lost, nor my faith diminished, but increased.' To all this the Holy Spirit bore his testimony, and the Saviour seemed to say, 'Thou art complete in me. Wait a little while, and thou shalt behold my glory.' This sweet communion lasted for a few hours. My heart was so full I could scarcely eat my dinner, or speak to my daughter when she came into the room. The joy, peace, love, and praise that filled my heart cannot be expressed. I blessed his holy, lovely name a great many times, and shall for ever bless him.

"R. DRAPER."

She went through many sore and heavy trials; but the Lord wonderfully sustained her, and enabled her to testify to the end of his faithfulness, and that he will perfect his own work, as many kind friends can testify, though most of her friends went before her. The Christmas day previous to her death, her daughter noticed how cheerful and happy she looked. In the evening she told me that she awoke in the morning with these words sweetly on her mind: "The mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace." This led her into sweet meditation upon the word of God, that he was the God of peace, the Maker of peace, having made peace by the blood of the cross. Indeed, all the word of God that spoke of peace seemed brought to her mind, and she told several friends that it was the happiest Christmas she had ever spent, although alone most part of the day.

Soon after this, she became worse in body, and on the 14th of January, the doctor said she would not recover. Most of the time she was much harassed and tried; and upon her friend Mr. D. saying, "I have been praying for you, that the enemy may not be suffered to harass you in your last moments;" she said, "Ah! but he is a chained enemy. He tried hard last night to persuade me that death should feed upon me, and that the upright should have dominion over me in the morning. But I said, "No, Satan, for I am one of the upright, made upright in Christ Jesus." At another time her daughter said, "I have been thinking of those sweet words: "Because of the savour of thy good ointments, therefore do

the virgins love thee.'” She answered, “I can think of nothing else but that the sting is taken out of death and that I am on the Eternal Rock.” At another time she said that hymn was very sweet to her; it was the language of her heart:

“Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,” &c.

One day I said to her, “You are too weak to speak much now.” She answered quickly, “I have said enough. All is right. I am upon the Eternal Rock of Ages; not one glimpse of darkness.” To Miss B., Mr. Huntington’s grand-daughter, she said, “It is a deep river, but I shall get through.” Miss B. said, “You are in the hands of God.” She answered, “I feel as if I were sleeping in his arms.” At another time she told me to tell a friend in the country it was easier to talk about religion when in health than upon a dying bed. On another occasion a friend said, “I did not expect to see you again this side of the river.” She said, “No; but the Lord knows best. The enemy often thrusts sore at me; but he is not suffered to prevail, for the Lord often gives me some sweet sips of his favour.” At another time she said that hymn was particularly sweet to her:

“My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of thine.”

A relation, on parting, said, “I hope we may meet in heaven.” She answered, “I am sure of going there, and the Lord grant that you may be there too.”

It now became evident that her days were drawing to a close, and having received much instruction from her conversation at various times, I was anxious to gather up the few remaining moments of her life, and said to her, “Dear mother, you are now about to enter into that rest that remaineth for the people of God.” Although hardly able to articulate, she said, “The everlasting arms are underneath;” at the same time saying many things in broken sentences for my own instruction in the things of God, and finally concluded, “May the Lord prosper you.”

Her kind friend Mr. N. visited her several times during her illness. To him she spoke freely of the Lord’s mercy and faithfulness. His last visit was about two hours before her departure, when it was thought she was too far gone to be able to speak to him. On his entering the room, she stretched out her hand, and said, “It is all peace. The everlasting arms are underneath.” She tried to say much more; but all that could be understood was, “O! I have many sweet things, but the body won’t let me tell you.” These were the last words to be understood. Her breathing grew shorter and shorter, till half-past one o’clock, when her spirit fled to join her Redeemer, on the 29th of January, 1866, in the 81st year of her age.

T. MULVEY.

I EARNESTLY desire to use this cry on my death-bed: “God be merciful to me a sinner!” Not that I doubt of his mercy, but my meaning is, that I may renounce everything of my own, and depart out of this world resting wholly on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus.—*S. Turner.*

AUGUST 1, 1866.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

AUGUST, 1866.

MATT. V. 6; 2 TIM. I. 9; ROM. XI. 7; ACTS VIII. 37, 38; MATT. XXVIII. 10.

A SERMON PREACHED

BY THE LATE MR. BIRCH,* OF CRANBROOK, 1ST MARCH,
1857.

“Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.”—ISA. xxx. 26.

THIS prophet, who was a child of light, walked much in the light, and delighted in it, as he says, (v. 2,) “Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.” He seems also much delighted to speak of the light, and by this, I doubt not, he administered much light of comfort to the children of light, who are often walking in darkness. Hence they have always been found delighting much in this prophet; for he that sows light for the righteous will ever have some to follow such a precious seedsman, while he is scattering his seed. “Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.” (Ps. xcvi. 11.) “They come to the light as doves fly to their windows.” (Isa. lx. 8.) May the Lord, who is the light of his people, send out this day his glorious light and his truth into your souls, which may offend the children of the night, and the serpent’s seed, but will do good to those who fear God, and delight to hear the words of the great Prophet, Jesus Christ.

The glorious things of “the world to come,” in other words, of the gospel dispensation, are often in Scripture shadowed forth by the glorious things in the creation of this world, and you know what a world of wonders it is. We read that at the creation, “The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” (Job xxxviii. 7.) God, at first, did make “two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night.” These words are true, both in a literal and a spiritual sense. In Joseph’s remarkable dream, the sun, and the moon, and the eleven stars are spoken of,—great titles, indeed, to be conferred on mere men; but as Jacob may be considered as a type of Christ, so his wife may be viewed as a type of the church of God, and the twelve sons as figurative of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

* Our readers will not mistake the author of this sermon for the late Mr. Burch, of Staplehurst.

The moon is first to be considered. The light which she affords is here compared to the light of the sun; and the light of the sun is to be "sevenfold, as the light of seven days," intimating a more glorious dispensation in its sevenfold heat and lustre. The time is also here specified when all this shall take place; and the particular circumstances which mark and point out the particular day. It is "when the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke (or wound) of their (his) wound," (or, as it might be rendered, the wound of his smiting.) The church of the elect is compared to the moon in Song vi. 10: "Who is this that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, terrible as an army with banners," or a bannered host. The church of God, by which I mean the elect of God, has ever had light from the beginning, and a precious light too: "And her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper-stone, clear as crystal." (Rev. xxi. 11.) The light which he gave to Adam was small, but it was a true and steady light, in which he and Methuselah, Enoch, Shem, and others walked and delighted to think and talk of. These were very wise men whom he set in his church as stars or guides to others, and their light shone in their ministry, especially in that of Noah, to whom was granted a special measure of light; for he had given to him a clearer view of Jehovah our righteousness than any that went before him, and showed this path of life in a clearer way; for he is declared by the unerring Spirit of God to be not only an heir, but "a preacher of righteousness;" being typical of the Son of God, who founded a new world in which he was to be sole author of all salvation, preached the great tidings of righteousness in the great congregation, and is most emphatically called "Jehovah our righteousness." Now, in the garden of Eden was exhibited light for the righteous; for now the moon began to receive light. It is written "the cherubim and a flaming sword were placed at the east of the garden of Eden to keep the way of the tree of life." These cherubim represented gospel preaching, and the flaming sword denotes the fiery law of God; as much as to say, there is now no way to the tree of life by the law or the deeds of it.

Here was light and instruction sown to the righteous; nor do I or can I believe that the gracious God ever was or ever will be wanting to his people, whom he foreknew, in any one mercy. Could you and I have been present, we should have heard strange things from Adam and Methuselah. They searched diligently into the great things which were wrapped up in the first mysterious promise. The Holy Spirit of God was in the elect from the beginning, and he always did and always will testify of Christ, the only-begotten of the Father, in some way or other; more distinctly, it is true, in these latter days; "for all things that I heard of my Father," said our Lord, "I have made known unto you," but not more savingly from the beginning. This tree of life is twice taken notice of in the book of the Revelation: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." (Rev. ii. 7.) Again: "In the midst of the street of it, and on either

side of it, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruits every month;" (Rev. xxii. 2;) so that we see that the same in substance and in reality is found in the church of God to this day. May we not ask, Has God at any time forgotten to be gracious to his poor afflicted elect? No; we may confidently aver, by no means. He showed to Adam that life was to come by faith, and that believing, he was to have life in his name who was to come. "He that shall come will come." (Heb. x. 37.) And was not here the substance, yea, the very essence, of all blessings set forth to Adam, Methuselah, Shem, and Noah? Did not those truly wise men think on the type, yea, and understand it, and keep it? and was not that word as true then as it is now? "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me;" (John xiv. 21;) and again: "If a man love me," &c. He has indeed borne all the elect from the very womb of the morning; never, never was he at any time found wanting to his own dear people. They had the very substance at all times given to them. To them, no less than unto us, was the gospel preached in substance; for Christ is the life, and he is our life: "God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." (1 John v. 11.) The moon reflected this light, though dimly yet truly, though weakly yet savingly. They walked in the light, and, in so doing, walked with God, for "God is light," and they walked through all the darkness of this world, being guided by Christ, the light of the world, and by the light of his word, which ever has and ever will be one and the same. "I am the true light." The moon is not the sun, though she borrows all her light from him; but the time was to come when the woman was to be clothed with the sun; the moon, the former dispensation, under her feet, as having come to years of maturity, and as having put away childish things, the weak and beggarly elements, the rudiments of the world, the law which made nothing perfect. She is now manifestly perfect in Christ Jesus, and the stars, her twelve apostles, are her crown of knowledge. (Prov. xiv. 18.)

Another light of the moon was seen in the *sacrifices*, which were instituted immediately upon the fall, and they afforded a sweet inlet into this blessed truth, that there is forgiveness with God. They could not, it is true, take away sin; but they typified him that could. They spake plainly and intelligibly, and the light of faith in them, as types, afforded peace, comfort, and joy. This was experienced by Abel, who looked beyond the sacrifice to him that was prefigured by it. His faith met with acceptance; God testified by some outward sign which Cain could see and understand that he was well pleased with Abel. He "obtained a good report through faith;" "he obtained witness that he was righteous," not only pardoned, but actually righteous, which plainly shows the inseparable connection between pardon and justification; and truly so, for Christ is the object that faith looks at, and he is the end of the law for righteousness, as well as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. These sacrifices, offered in faith, were a light in their

path. The way into the holiest was not yet made manifest; the Lamb of God had not yet been made manifest to the world. In this dark night the moon afforded light to the children of light. They offered in faith; they lived by that faith; they had peace by faith, and they died in faith. The moon and the stars are preachers of righteousness, as they rule by night. Preachers are called "rulers" because they rule in the church or congregation by doctrine, and rule in judgment. (Isa. xxxii. 1.) "Obey them that have the rule over you." (Heb. xiii. 17.) These stars testified before of the coming of the Just One. I believe that Noah was a star of the first magnitude in the old world. "Rest" is the meaning of his name. God smelled a savour of rest in his sacrifice; and he found rest where God found rest; and you will find it nowhere else, try long as you may. All other ways are crooked, and they that turn aside after their own crooked ways, (and every way but Christ is crooked,) "the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity!" Now, let these ordinances respecting sacrifices be brought to the light of the Sun of the gospel dispensation, and see what a glorious beauty is reflected on them. We can understand their sacrifices in every particular better than they either did or could; but the elect rested wholly on divine revelation, wishing not to be wiser than the great prophet Jesus Christ; for the church never was without a prophet, and that prophet was the Son of God. But the light of the moon did not stop here. What the prophet (Ezekiel xli. 7) says of the mystical temple is true of the church: "And there was an enlarging upwards from the lowest chamber to the highest." This enlarging and addition was constantly taking place. The Lord showed his care for his church by constant additional light ministered by outward things, as well as clearer revelation by the spirit of prophecy.* (Rev. xix. 10.) "God shall enlarge Japheth;" enlarge his coast; enlarge his boundary, his light, his knowledge. How greatly did God enlarge his church by the singular call of Abraham, in whom sovereignty shone conspicuously; effectual calling demonstrated; ("I called him alone." Isa. li. 2;) and righteousness, which is the substance of the gospel, made such a conspicuous figure! For Paul testified that "the gospel was preached before to Abraham;" and says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ," for "therein is the righteousness of God revealed." The moon reflected a great deal of light by Abraham. He shone conspicuous among the stars, for he had much light come communicated to him. He was called emphatically an "anointed" one, (Ps. cv. 15,) or a partaker of the most holy Spirit. He is also called "a prophet," (Gen. xx. 7,) and a "father" in a spiritual sense, (Gen. xvii. 5,) who was to teach his people the way of the Lord, (Gen. xviii. 19,) which way is Christ. Now, although the sun had not risen on the earth as it did in the glorious days of Christ the Son of God and Son of man, yet Abraham's days before

* In the prophets, whose views were enlarged, and the truth much more unfolded, opened, and explained. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

the giving of the law, and the cumbrous train of ceremonies and institutions, yet those days, I say, are referred to in Scripture as more purely evangelical and more simple than the days of the law, which lasted from Moses's day to the coming of the Lord Jesus, and were continued for about forty years after, when they were completely put an end to by the final destruction of the temple, which period lasted about fifteen hundred years. Read Malachi iii. 4: "Then shall the offering of Judah, &c., be acceptable to the Lord as in days of old," &c. In the days of Abraham, the worship was more simple. There was not then the pen of the scribe, (Isa. x. 1,) which wrote grievousness, which they, not God, had prescribed, and who bound heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and laid them on men's shoulders, (Matt. xxiii. 4,) besides the law which was interwoven with that dispensation, so that, as Peter says, "it was a yoke which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear." (Acts xv. 10.) And yet all this is brought in again by Popery, Puseyism, and blind, hard-hearted ignorant Protestants, who love a gaudy show, and know neither law nor gospel experimentally. Men will have their own way, although it is a perfect hedge of thorns (Prov. xv. 19) to walk upon. They prefer it to the light yoke of Christ, the pleasant ways of wisdom and her paths of peace; (Prov. iii. 17;) and God is now giving them over to it, that they may know the difference between his service, (2 Chron. xii. 8,) and the service of men, or rather the devil, who is a hard master.* Of Abraham, we find no fault found as to his worship, but hear him much commended by the Lord himself: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day;" (John viii. 56;) and I believe he saw much of the future, immortal sacrifice which was to perfect for ever them which are sanctified by faith in it. (Heb. x. 14.) A real son of Abraham is called a son of the free woman. (Gal. iv. 23-26.) Here the light reflected from the church shone brighter than before. It received a succession of light and more abundance, still going on until it attained its perfection in the glorious Sun of righteousness. The church was to be well disciplined by Moses, and made to long for the day to dawn, and the shadows to flee away. Until then they were to "get them to the mountains of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense." (Song iv. 6.) Still there was further light during the period of almost fifteen hundred years, a long time in which the faith of the saints were to be exercised and tried: "Here is the patience and faith of the saints." (Rev. xiii. 10.) God has in all ages tried the faith and patience of his people, and this is hard to our proud, pretentious nature, which likes to have its own way, and would fain dictate to infinite wisdom; but Abraham was by the blessed Spirit subdued to the will of his God; so that "after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise" of life when he died. (Heb. vi. 15.) In Moses's days the moon had all the light administered to it, which could be given to that dispensation. All the ordinances reflected light, though dimly: "For the law had but a

* How good, how true these remarks are!—ED.

shadow of good things to come." (Heb. x. 1.) These shadows were to be had regard to, and the elect had respect to them, and practised the ordinances in faith and were approved of, walking in all the commands and ordinances of the Lord blameless. (Luke i. 6.) Take notice they that worshipped acceptably are first of all called righteous, and that too before God: "And they were both righteous before God." They who lived under the law received instruction by it, although to the greater part their table or sacrifices became a snare, and that which should have been for their welfare became a trap. (Ps. lxxix. 22.) But the godly looked into these things, and saw a hidden, indescribable beauty in them, so that David said: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold, ('gaze upon,') the beauty of the Lord." (Ps. xxvii. 4.) The church looked forth as the morning; fair as the moon. (Song vi. 10.) They who were of a free, enlarged spirit had their spirit in subjection to Christ, and learnt much instruction by what the Master of the house was pleased to give,—such as the Ark and the Candlestick.

But let us look back awhile at Abraham, and see what light is given by him. He is called "the father of many nations;" but he could give spiritual life to not one single soul; he could not quicken his own soul, much less the souls of others. But now the light of the moon is become the light of the sun. Christ Jesus, whom Abraham represented, can and does give spiritual life to an innumerable company. He is indeed "the everlasting Father," as he is called. (Isa. ix. 6.) He is God that quickeneth the dead. (Rom. iv. 17.) This is his high prerogative: "I give my sheep eternal life." (John x. 28.) Again, "I make all things new." (Rev. xxi. 5.) He is the sole Author of the new creation, as it is called by Paul: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." (2 Cor. v. 17.) He forms the new man, and says, "I have created him for my glory; I have formed him; yea, I have made him." (Isa. xliii. 7.) "This people I," as the great Potter, for the allusion is to that, "have formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." (Isa. xliii. 21.) Here is, indeed, the light of the moon become as the light of the sun. Instead of boasting in Abraham, as the Jew does, we boast, we make our boast all the day long, without fear of being found fault with, in our Lord Jesus Christ, the everlasting Father, the Prince of life, (Acts iii. 15,) the Prince of peace, the Author of our faith, and the Finisher of it, who gives himself this great, this glorious title to John: "I am the first and the last, and the living one; (for so it may be translated;) and I was dead, and am alive for evermore, amen, and have the keys of hell and of death." (Rev. i. 17, 18.) Fear not, John, for thou hast no cause to fear. Let the Jews boast of Abram, their high father, whose name was changed into Abraham, the father of a multitude; we will boast all the day long of our dear Lord Jesus, the Lord from heaven, who is our Father. And all the elect, when quickened, may say with truth, "Doubtless, thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us." (Isa. lxiii. 16.)

“Thou art our Father, our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting.” It was said of old, “Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.” (Ps. xlv. 16.) Is not this the language of the Father to the Son, telling him that he was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, but that he should have a spiritual generation to serve him? (Ps. xxii. 30.) Begotten and born of himself; and who shall declare his generation? Princes they are indeed! who so great as a spiritual prince? Christ treats not his princes as the world does theirs. It is said of a wicked nobleman:

“In the worst inn’s worst room,
The star and garter dangling from the bed,
Where tawdry yellow vied with dirty red,”

was his end. The breath of a sovereign can make a peer; but cannot do what the Prince of life does for his own. He breathes upon them the Holy Spirit, who communicates to them a free, noble, heavenly spirit. This is not only the language of the New Testament, (John xx. 22,) but that also of the Old: “The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.” (Job xxxiii. 4.) Again: “But there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding.” They are, indeed, princes of the blood royal they resemble; they have the heart of a prince, and of a noble one; he did predestinate them to be conformed to the image of his Son. They rule over Satan, sin, and death. By him, their everlasting Father, they overcome the world, and had rather overcome it than have it. (1 John v. 4.) They love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; (1 John ii. 15;) but they love him that created it and upholds it, for the quintessence of happiness lies in him. I might have spoken of Jacob’s ladder. (Gen. xxviii. 12.) How instructive an emblem of the way of access of the one Mediator, the man Christ Jesus. (1 Tim. ii. 5.) I might also have spoken of the brazen serpent, (Num. xxxi. 8,) a wonderful type of him that was made sin for his people; (2 Cor. v. 21;) but I forbear.

Let me now return to the days of Moses; and here I will relate something which will delight the true disciples of Jesus, and I will speak of one thing which has exceedingly delighted me in days that are past. It is this. You must know, that under that comparatively dark dispensation, there was a plain, marked, evident distinction made between the curse and the blessing, between the children of the curse, for so it is literally translated, (2 Pet. ii. 14,) and those appointed to inherit a blessing. (1 Pet. ii. 9.) There were two mountains appointed for this purpose, the one was called Gerizim, the other, Mount Ebal. (Deut. xi. 29.) Now, take notice, the blessings were pronounced on Mount Gerizim, all of them by the children of the free women, Leah and Rachel; and the curses were pronounced on Mount Ebal, by the children of the bond women, and two of Leah’s children, to make up the number; and even this is significant, for although the children of the free women are not themselves under the curse, yet they are awfully instrumental

in pronouncing a curse on all those that depart from the Lord: "O Lord, the hope of Israel, all they that depart from thee shall be written in the earth," &c. (Jer. xvii. 13.) "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." (Matt. xviii. 18.) They shall have a hand in judging men, and being witnesses against them that stumble at the word. (Matt. x. 18.) In this significant ordinance were depicted the two awful lines of separation drawn through the world.

(To be continued.)

A TESTIMONY FOR THE LORD OF LIFE AND GLORY.

BEING much exercised, for many years, on the ground of infidelity, and as the Lord has, in a great measure, delivered my soul from its tyrannical power, by giving me many conspicuous answers to prayer, and feeling it to be a strong bulwark of Satan's, by which many of the Lord's children are often tried, I feel a desire, as far as the Lord shall enable me, to raise my feeble voice against that trap of the devil, and to speak on God's behalf of what I have known, handled, and felt of eternal things, and of the remarkable answers to prayer which I trust he has given me; and if my writing should be blessed to me or any poor soul, to his dear name be all the glory. I have gone many times to the Lord for wisdom in the matter, and been much exercised as to my real motive in writing, before a heart-searching God; and I trust I can say, "Let my name rot and be annihilated from the face of the earth, but let the name of the Lord be exalted."

As far as I can learn, I was born on the 30th January, 1809. My mother, I hope, was a chosen vessel, and died in the faith when I was young, 11 years old or thereabouts. My father, a man, I fear, of the world, died when I was five or six years old. My dear mother often spoke to me of sin, of heaven, and of hell; and I remember often going into a secret place to beg the Lord to forgive my sins. I also remember talking to my playfellows, with some feeling, of heaven and the wicked place. Death was a great trouble to me in those days, so that I could not play like the rest of the boys. I often thought how happy I should be if it was not for death. Death and judgment were terrible to me. Thunder and lightning used to make me tremble. I have often left the boys and gone and groaned and cried for mercy; but as I grew in years I got hardened in sin, often making vows, and as often breaking them.

After my mother's death, I was put into the poorhouse for a time, and then apprenticed to a butcher. Having a cruel master, I suffered many hardships; and I believe, but for the tender mercy of the Lord, he would have killed me, as I fear he did his wife; but he is gone into that world of spirits where the secrets of all hearts are open. The Lord raised up some in the town who took my case before the magistrates, and they fined him for cruel treatment, and took me away, so that he had no more claim on me.

Here I will relate two remarkable providences on my behalf,

though a vile monster of iniquity. O the tender mercy of the Lord to his dear children, even when living in rebellion against him! On one occasion, when in a loft and pulling at a rope, it suddenly gave way. I went backwards, and was coming down head foremost, when I exclaimed, "Lord, have mercy upon me," thinking it was all over. A man standing close by caught me just before my head touched the ground, or, being paved stones, I must have broken my neck.

When living with my master, he kept a horse and an ass, which he let out on hire. The ass was brought home late one night. My master, as his custom was, was at a public-house. It was a very dark night, and there were thunder and lightning, which I was much afraid of, fearing the day of judgment was come. I tried to take the ass to the field, as it was right I should. I went part of the way, but he was so frightened he would not go. I then brought him back, put him in the stable, and went to bed, my mistress staying up for my master. About 12 he came home, and the first thing he said was, "Where is Jim?" "Gone to bed." "Where is the donkey?" "In the stable." "How was it he did not do as I required?" "The donkey was afraid, and he could not get him along." He then tore up stairs, dragged me partly down before I was hardly awake, half naked, took a stick and drove both me and the donkey part of the way. He then went back and told his wife if the donkey was not in the field, he would settle me there in taking away my life. When I returned, his wife would have told me the fact, but dared not speak. He asked me if I had put him in the field. I said, "Yes." "Well," he said, "I think there will be some sheep-stealing to night. We will go and watch." He then put on his great-coat, took a large stick, and walked me back about a mile and a half. We walked round the field, and then he stopped short, and, like a fiend, roared out he had found me out. I trembled. He raised the stick to knock my brains out, as he had told his wife he should; but that moment the donkey brayed, though we had walked round the field and could not see him. He seemed paralyzed, dropped the stick, and walked home without a word. The next day his wife told me all about it, and I have at times thought the Lord, that opened Balaam's ass's mouth to forbid the madness of the prophet, opened his to save my life. O my soul, admire and wonder! Not a dog can move his tongue without his will; and if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without the notice of heaven, these things could not be by chance.

After this, I left him. His wife was found dead one morning in her bed, for which he stood his trial, but got off. The people in the town believed him to have been the cause of her death, as he had beaten her very badly over night, and he became a town bye-word, and lived and died in an awful state.

After this I was brought into a very low state, often without food and no place to sleep in but a cart or outhouse, as I could not pay for lodgings till my step-father gave me a bed. I had taken up with several bad boys, and often went out stealing to satisfy hunger; but it did not stop here, for we went from bad to worse. O the horrors.

of my mind at that time! But I was ashamed to back out, for fear of being called a coward, and yet afraid to go to sleep for fear of opening my eyes in hell; and if the Lord had not in mercy prevented it, I should have no doubt been tried by the laws of my country; but, bless his dear name, he did not wholly give me up to the hardness of my heart, but often tore my conscience to pieces. My companions and I had made an appointment to rob an old woman who lived in a wood and got her bread by keeping poultry. This was much against my will, but I did not like to be thought a coward. This was the first step we had taken towards house-breaking. We went, but did not succeed; and glad was I of it. The plan was laid to go again in a week or so. I went home with all the horrors of a guilty conscience. I went up stairs to go to bed, but did not. I sat upon the bed for some time, thinking over my awful state. I thought "Even if I escape being caught, death is coming, and after that hell; and if I should die in my sleep, O what should I do?" I thought of the omnipresence of that God that made me, and that he could do anything. I knew nothing of the dear Redeemer, but I fell on my knees and begged the Lord to have mercy on me, and said, "Lord, I believe that thou art here present and knowest my thoughts, and thou dost know that I cannot stand against the temptation of those I am mixed up with." I then said if he would remove me to some place where I knew no one, I would turn to him with full purpose of heart; and I verily believe he heard me. I then got into bed, and as this was up in a loft, I knew that nobody heard me. The next day, or the day following, I cannot say which, I was sent for to see a lady. She asked me if I should like to go to Bristol to live, as she had a letter from a friend there wishing her to send a boy. I said, "Yes, I will go." She then gave me a letter, and I went off by the waggon at night, and went to my place in the morning. Thus the Lord heard and answered my cry, and snatched me as a brand from the fire of my wicked companions, who with me were going headlong to hell. I was 24 miles away before their vile purpose was accomplished.

O the tender mercy of the Lord to one who has deserved hell thousands of times. I have no stone to throw. The Lord delivered me, and left them to fill up the measure of their iniquities. One of them, some years afterwards, shot himself dead when intoxicated; another was transported, and the other is still living. May the Lord show him mercy, if it is his will.

Thousands of times I have used an oath at the end of my words, because of others, and yet conscience bore witness against me that I was doing wrong. I found my vows were as weak as water. I took the same vile heart with me to Bristol, and those I had to work with were on the same road to destruction. O how true it is that if the Ethiopian can change his skin and the leopard his spots, then may they do good who are accustomed to do evil. My master and mistress were Wesleyans, and insisted upon our going to a place of worship, and taking home the text. Instead of going to a place of worship, I went with many more to bathe. I swam about half way

across, when this thought struck me, "If I have the cramp, I shall sink to the bottom and drop into hell." What to do I did not know. I begged for mercy and got across. But here I was in a fix, as my clothes were on the other side. I was afraid to plunge into the stream. I then begged of the Lord to preserve me this once, and I vowed I would never break his Sabbath again. I crossed, put on my clothes, and went off like a thief.

The same afternoon, seeing many jump off the bath bridge into the water, admired by the spectators, pride prompted me to try it; endeavouring to drown my remorse and fear, I undressed and went into the water, but was afraid to go out of my depth, as death and hell were before me; I got out and went home with a lie to cover my sin. I went to bed with a guilty conscience, but had not been there long before I was awoken by a heavy peal of thunder. I thought the day of judgment was come, and every moment expected to be summoned to the bar of God. I got out of bed, crying aloud for mercy. My mistress and family tried all they could to pacify me, but to no purpose. I had hell in my conscience, and expected every minute to be cut off as a guilty wretch. After some time, the family retired to bed and left me. O the cry of my soul that night for mercy!

The next morning I was laughed at for being a fool; but death, hell, and judgment were too weighty matters to be laughed at. I felt from that moment I was a vile sinner, and that without pardon I should be sure to go to hell.

I was from that time forced to leave my companions. I could no longer be one with them, but a final separation took place. No more lying, swearing, or thieving. I had the sentence of death in myself and told them they would surely go to hell if they pursued the same course. I was forced to confess to my master and mistress and to beg their forgiveness.

I was then taken ill. The state of my mind and body brought me very near the grave. I was afraid to be by myself for fear the devil should take me. I thought I could see death behind me, and expected every moment I should drop down dead. I used to go to the Wesleyan chapel, and the people had a prayer-meeting for me after the sermon, and exhorted me to lay hold of the promises; but I would have given the world to lay hold and get rid of my burden, but could not. O how I have wept and cried for mercy in any place where I could not be heard. I could scarcely do my work. Indeed, my master intended to send me home to my parish, but my mistress sympathised with me and allowed me anything that I could make use of to keep up my strength, for I was brought very low both in body and mind. They thought I should destroy myself. My burden got heavier, till I was forced to go out of the house and go I knew not where. Yea, I was a terror to myself and all about me. I went to a person I thought knew pardon to beg him to pray for me; but was astonished to find him so unconcerned, merely telling me to lay hold of Christ, as he was waiting with open arms. I strove with all my might and power to do so, but I was shut up in unbelief and could not come forth. I then went off to a bye-place

in a field and got into a ditch, determined never to eat, drink, or sleep, or to rise from that spot till I had found mercy. There I groaned and cried for mercy till my very knees sank under me in the mire. O how I longed to realise that hymn,

“Now will I tell to sinners round
What a dear Saviour I have found.”

In this state I continued for some months. “O that I had never been born! O eternity, eternity!” Sometimes a little hope sprang up. I remember telling my master one day I believed the Lord would pardon my sins. That hope kept me from sinking, at times.

I was one day at work in the bakehouse when I felt a softness come over me; and in a moment my burden was gone. I felt as light as a feather. I could hardly help shouting aloud for joy. I went out of the city a little way, and my very heart and soul went out in prayer. Yea, it seemed a new world. The people, the houses, the very heavens seemed to be different, and I had almost uninterrupted communion with God for six months. The Bible was unsealed to me, and it was all promised. All I asked for I had; and the more I was persecuted the more I enjoyed. I used to be like a child to a father, running with every trouble; and it was, “Fear not; I am with thee.” The hay-loft, the stable, was a Bethel indeed, both night and day. O how sweet it was to awake in the morning and find the Lord still with me. Yea, the very pillow was wet with tears, not of sorrow but of joy. O how sweet their memory still! O how I have begged of the Lord to let me go home! How I envied the old and gray-headed! I remember going out from the oven when in a perspiration in hope of getting cold that I might die. Here I did wrong; but it was in ignorance. I wanted to bathe in that sea of love where there is no bottom, bound, nor shore. At that time I used to travel to country fairs; and O the blessed times I have had shut up in my cart, when the people were fighting and swearing outside.

After some few months, I gradually sank from the mount where I seemed to be in view of the city. I was often grieved in my calling with the filthy conversation of the wicked; but my sun shone, I believe, for six months almost without a cloud. O happy moments! I wanted to tell all the world the beauty there was in Christ. I wrote many letters, and put them under people’s doors, pointing out their awful state before God, and exhorting them to come to Jesus. I carried out tracts, visited the sick, and became full of zeal, but a great deal not according to knowledge. Many that I took for the children of God grieved me much, and put many stumblingblocks in my way, which broke my bones, made me go halting, and brought my words to be very few. I had been nearly two years in my place, when the language I heard at fairs grieved me so much that I got under the stall and begged the Lord to deliver me out of it and never let me come to another fair; and I believe he heard me, as that was the last one I went to; for the Lord opened another door for me where I was for seven years.

Many hidings of his face and mansweet views I had of him who is the altogether lovely. One time in particular I had been very much cast down and was very weak in body. I was told by my medical man I was in a decline. After being bled and physicked till I was hardly able to work, I thought of the omnipotence of Jehovah, and that with him all things are possible. I carried my case to him, told him of his adding to Hezekiah's life 15 years, and that he could restore me and add to my life 15 years if he saw fit. All the medical men said I was in a decline, but I felt sure the Lord would heal me, from the nearness I felt to him; so that I came down stairs and put down the day of the month. This is nearly 30 years ago. I left off going to the doctor and soon recovered my usual health.

I often got into a secret place to have my meals, and many times wept for joy when all has been war around me. I used to enjoy much in reading the word of God in that dark Sodom at my meal times. There were 30 or 40 men, and I knew but one that I had a hope of.

I was one day at work as usual with a long rake in my hand mixing a hot boiler of sugar, when that word came to me, "Redeemed." I felt it from my head to my feet. It came again, "Redeemed," as before. I felt it go through me. It came again, "Redeemed," and I seemed to see in the eye of my mind Calvary and thousands standing round, and I was trying to excel them all, shouting of redeeming grace and dying love; and I verily thought if it had come again I should have dropped. I was ready to cry out, "I can't bear it;" when I came to myself. I still had the rake in my hand, the tears running down my face. The foreman came to me, and it was like cold water. I verily thought then I could not bear another drop. I should like to have another. I think I would not cry out for it to be removed, but desire to die in it. I believe in the body we can only bear a certain weight of joy or sorrow.

I went in the strength of this many days; but sin often brought a cloud betwixt my soul and the Lord. Then I sank very low. Then the corruption of my heart was such I dare not name nor hint at; yea, I have thought there never was a more filthy wretch than I was; but this I have known at times, when forced to groan from real necessity, it has been removed in a moment. I have tried everything to bring my body into subjection, but I find there is nothing like real pressed-out prayers. I cannot throw a stone at any libertine on the face of the globe, for such should I be, yea, worse, but for the grace of God. Sometimes I was enabled to rebuke those about me, which always brought enmity and persecution. I remember one day having my breakfast in a private or inside room, being quiet, when the foreman came in and ordered me out, and used very bad language, which grieved my soul. This I felt very hard, as I had given him no cause for it. It was the only place where I could get to and be quiet. Sometimes I read a word when I was eating; but I was enabled to take it patiently. When he was gone I took my Bible to see if there was a word for me, when I opened at Job xviii.

16: "His roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his branch be cut off." I felt sure it was for him. Soon after this his wife was taken off with a stroke; then his goods were seized and sold; and himself was then taken ill. I really felt for him and thought of taking him a bottle of wine. He recovered for a time, but got into disgrace with the master, and was put from his foremanship to be the lowest in the works. Some disease took him. He was taken to the hospital, and died; so that I saw it fulfilled to the letter. Surely "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." "Will not God avenge his own elect, who cry day and night unto him? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily." May the Lord ever keep me tender on this ground; for they that touch them touch the apple of God's eye. I have no stone to throw. I am a vile monster; and wherein I differ it is, I humbly hope, mercy.

I always was an unbelieving wretch, sometimes up and sometimes down, often filled with unbelief and often tormented with infidelity, that stronghold of hell. I have heard many of the living family speak of their standing without a doubt, when I have been filled full of fears as to the real ground of my state before the Lord. Sometimes I have felt all was well; then I have sunk down again, sometimes almost to black despair. Sometimes I could sing,

"The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day. †
And there have I, though vile as he,
Wash'd all my sins away."

Then I would sink down very low, and sing,

"O may I there, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away."

And it has been my desire that the Lord would ever keep me from a mere *thought* faith, and from persuading myself into a vain confidence without the dew of heaven on my branch bearing witness to the word of my mouth.

"Never, never let me dare,
What I'm not to say. I am;"

and it is my desire not to cast away my confidence, but to be thankful with every crumb.

But to return. I left my place without consulting the Majesty of heaven, when I had a year or two's hard conflict for the bread that perishes. But even here I hope I saw his hand. The Lord opened another door for me in providence, where I was soon able to pay the little debts I had made during the two years I was out; and what a pleasure I found in paying them. In my fresh place I had bread to the full, but leanness of soul. I had much darkness and was brought very low; and this led me to close examination as to my eternal standing. O how I longed for another visit; but still there was a hope, and that kept me from despair. There was no mortal to whom I could really open my mind. Both night and day the fields and woods have been the place of my groaning. I wanted the Lord to speak. My conscience was made very tender. I dare not do as

some who appeared to be giants; but I have found since there is a self-wrought confidence. These often stumbled me. They spoke much like Jacob, but their hands and life were much like Esau's. My house and pocket were often open for them; but when the Lord appeared for me, I was told it was fancy. Here we parted; so I proved, as Hart says,

“Companions, if we find,
Alas! how soon they're gone!”
(*To be continued.*)

SUPPLICATION.

IN this dreary wilderness,
Dearest Jesus, deign to bless
A poor needy sinner's heart,
And thy precious grace impart.
Give me true humility;
Give me, Lord, a view of thee;
Let me see thy lovely face;
Let me glory in thy grace.
May I less than nothing be;
Let me lose myself in thee,—
Lose my sins and hateful pride,
Gazing on thy wounded side;
Hanging on my much-loved Lord,
Humbly trusting in thy word,
Lying at thy sacred feet,
Resting in thy work complete;
Sinking lower and still lower,
Feeling in my spirit poor;
Rising higher and still higher,
Burning with intense desire;
Loathing self and all I am;
Clinging to the bleeding Lamb;
Cleansed from sin's polluted stain;
Looking on the Lamb once slain.
Keep me at thy gracious feet;
Sure no other spot 's so sweet!
Melt me by thy precious love;
Raise and fix my heart above.
Dearest Lord, I long to fly
To thy pleasant courts on high;
There to see thy lovely face,
And to triumph in thy grace;
Where the hateful monster, sin,
Ne'er shall chill the flame within;
But 'twill burn through endless days,
In thy soul-enlivening rays.

C. SPIRE.

DAVID'S most melodious sonnets were indited in his sorest troubles, and amidst floods of tears. Wherefore he saith, “It is good for me that I have been afflicted.”—*Daniel Rowland.*

A LETTER BY THE LATE HENRY FOWLER.

Dear Brother and Sister in Christ,—I have received your kind epistle, and can rejoice to hear, by your language, that you are still taught by that unerring teacher, the Spirit of Truth. "No man can call Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost;" and our dear Lord makes this a certain criterion, namely, "He that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me." And again, "All men must honour the Son even as they honour the Father;" because "it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;" and "he hath given him to be Head over all things to his church," which is his mystical body.

It is a mercy that our hiding place is no less a Person than the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, the Father's anointed, and our ever-living Head; and because he lives, we shall live also. All these are precious truths. The great business of the Lord Jesus from heaven to earth, and from earth to heaven, was to deliver his people from going down to the pit. For this cause "his goings forth have been ever of old, even from everlasting." For this end he appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh, was made of a woman, made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons, and know the things that are freely given to us of God. Christ was the guilty whom God would by no means clear. "It pleased the Lord to bruise him, to put him to grief, to make his soul an offering for sin;" and, that he might redeem us from the curse of the law, "he was made a curse for us," and suffered all the load of divine wrath due to our sins. In consequence of which, we hear the whisper of love and power, "Loose him and let him go." Thus the prey is taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive delivered. Because the Lord hath need of him, the bands of the wild ass are loosed, and the wild ass is sent out free; and all through the everlasting love of Jehovah,—Father, Son, and Spirit, the source of all the blessings the church receives. Christ as the Head is given to the church, and he is all in all, and we are one with him. He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. To us as his church he saith, "All my springs are in thee;" and we, as receivers, say the same to Jesus; for "of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." And the Holy Ghost beareth witness to the truth of this, by leading us to see our own emptiness, and by declaring that in him shall the Gentiles trust.

To have a right understanding in the mysteries of our redemption is one unspeakable blessing to enjoy, while we are in the valley below. By a right understanding, I do not mean head notions in things, but the knowledge of salvation through the remission of sins. A believer in Jesus is, first, for his own consolation, to prove his calling, and the rest will follow; and if he wants to do this, it must be by these two confessions, namely, "Lord, to whom shall I go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Secondly, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." Every believing soul is persuaded that there is salvation in no other but the adorable Jesus. He sees that he is

the alone hiding place, the sinner's only Friend; and his language is, "To whom shall I go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." And he can by experience say with the apostle, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." We "groan, being burdened."

This I am persuaded, my friend, is your experience. If so, to you the Lord hath commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." But, my dear friend, remember that distinguishing mercies never destroy soul conflicts; for "to us it is given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in his name, but also to suffer for his sake." We run into an error when we think that if we were beloved of God we should not feel ourselves such as we do by painful experience; but this we frequently do, especially in our younger days. We have an instance of this in the case of Ephraim, in Jeremiah xxxi. 18, 19. But fiery trials, sharp temptations, soul darkness, and the like, are no marks of God's displeasure. The world are strangers to them. They are at ease, asleep under the curses of a broken law; but "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us;" and "where there is no law, there can be no transgression:" Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ. "So then I with my mind serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin." The law cannot curse the believer, because Christ stood in his law place, room, and stead. Therefore the apostle saith, "Ye are not under the law, but under grace;" not under the law as a covenant of works; not under the law as the giver of comfort. "By the law shall no flesh living be justified;" "There is not a man that liveth and sinneth not;" "The law worketh wrath."

Concerning my own experience, I can only say that I enjoy most by living most abroad; for I am everything in myself but goodness. I meet with enemies from all quarters; but the Lord is my keeper. He never slumbers nor sleeps.

Your loving Brother in Christ,
Plymouth, Sept. 1, 1862. H. FOWLER.

TO BE RIGHT FOR ETERNITY.

My dear Friend in the Lord,—If the Lord will be gracious and merciful unto me a sinner, and give me a word by way of answer to your affectionate note, I will endeavour to tell you something of what my present state, case, and path now are; and "as face answers to face in water, so the heart of man to man," our feelings, exercises, thoughts, and views will correspond in proportion as we have been led by the footsteps of the flock in the good old way that leads to God and the heavenly city of pure celestial bliss. There a body of sin and death, a tempting devil, and an alluring world, with all the accumulated evils of time will be for ever done away. These light afflictions will enhance the song. For I trust and hope for myself, and am certain that my friend has a good hope through grace; and, therefore, we shall see Jesus as he is. Here we see through a glass darkly. Here we know but in part. Here we are at school,

learning a little of the bitter effects of the fall, and a little of the preciousness of Jesus, when he kindly shows us a token for good, assures us that he has engraven us upon the palms of his hands, and that our walls are continually before him, each stone in its proper place.

My state of experience is very trying. Necessity compels me to prove and try what is truth, pure doctrinal truth, inwrought in the heart. Past experience, tried by present trials, proves what is of God and what is of the flesh. The furnace and the flood try faith and experience, and faith and experience try and prove the God of truth to be faithful to his word and work. He is not a man that he should lie or repent. His mind, will, counsel, and pleasure must be done.

My case is hard and complicate: "To be carnally minded is death." Here I am, with often nothing but a groan and a sigh. These are all the signs of life I have. The new man appears shut up as in a prison, a helpless captive; but when Jesus smiles, this feeble worm lifts up his head, looks out of obscurity, and hopes for a gospel day of rest. My path is very intricate within and without. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Certainly the way cannot be wrong if Jesus is seen, at times, in it; but when the Lord sets darkness in the path it seems hard work to grope out the way. This little word, "Follow me," means in the regeneration, in the spirit. Faith here must trace the path of life in the word of God. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all walked, and worked, and fought by faith. Prophets the same, apostles the same, all lived and died in faith. The faith of God's elect which purifies the heart works by love, and overcomes the world.

That great and glorious incommunicable and everlasting name, "I am that I am," belongs to our adorable Immanuel. May I have grace given me to give him the glory of it by trusting in it. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away," is the word which he has spoken.

Faith, however small, is an indestructible grace. It cleaves to Jesus. Racks, fires, floods, Satan, nor all the infidels upon earth can ever destroy it. It has its life in God. Love flows from God, and carries back the soul in love to God. Hope is an anchor for stormy weather. Its object is the God of hope; Immanuel on the throne, above all his enemies, above all his sorrows and sufferings. To hope against hope is the highest exercise of it. For "we are saved by hope." Thus, every dark and stormy night is ridden out, Jesus appears on the sea shore, and the new man says, "It is the Lord."

O for faith and patience in the path of tribulation, with power to hold fast what we have received of the knowledge of Jesus, by hearing his voice, feeling him within us, our life, truth, and way, and seeing him in the liftings up of the light of his countenance upon us; for there have been times when we have said, "This God is our God for ever and ever." Will he not then be our guide even until death?

I learn by your note we are companions in tribulation; I thank you for your communication. And what shall I say more? Truly the

glorious gospel of Christ will be found the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth; but it is an alarming thought if it be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. The Lord knoweth them that are his. The children of God scattered abroad will all be gathered. Jesus will say, "Here am I, and the children which God hath given me. These are for signs." And truly they are the wonders of grace's productions. In this present evil world these are men wondered at, and are a wonder unto themselves. Grace and corruption often render them a mystery to themselves; so that in every sense they are a peculiar people. To have much of Christ, and to deny one's self would be very desirable; but our desires, wishes, and schemes about things, are often like ourselves, that is, childish. When the Lord lays a heavy cross upon the back, thwarts our plans, and gives us days of adversity to consider, we had rather have something else; but so it must be. It is through many trials, and much tribulation we must enter the kingdom.

O what a mercy to be right for eternity! O what a word, "eternity!" What is time? What is the body? What are earthly possessions? A mere shadow, a mere nothing, when compared with Christ and eternity. But, alas! how often I betray myself. I profess one thing and practise another. I have long desired to busy myself at the cross, and walk with God, but often seem to go backwards and get worse; sometimes heartless and careless, always helpless; for without Jesus I can do nothing; and I often seem to spoil all. The Lord alone is to be exalted, and the loftiness of man laid low.

If Jesus will kindly smile upon this barren production, and make it in any measure glad tidings, I shall be glad of a line at any time when convenient, saying so.

Dear Friend, Your's,

King's Cliffe, Feb. 4th, 1852.

R. N. IRESON.

THE LAW IN THE MIND AND THE LAW IN THE MEMBERS.

My very dear Friend and respected Brother in a precious Christ,—Grace be with thee, my dearly beloved.

I thank you for your kind anxiety about me, and for an interest in your prayers. This I do esteem as a great favour from the Lord.

You may well wonder that you are not in hell. I am sure I wonder that I am not; but what a mercy it is that God the Holy Ghost is graciously pleased, in his sovereign way of working, to unfold to our view and feelings the desperate deceit and wretchedness of our hearts by little and little, just as he enables us to bear it; for were it disclosed to us at once, we must sink under it into the arms of death and despair. Some, indeed, are led into the mystery of the iniquity within sooner than others; but those who know the most know but little compared to what they really are in the sight

of a holy and righteous God. Our old Adam natures still remain the same as they were in our unregeneracy, and therefore are capable of anything that the Lord permits and divine grace does not restrain and keep them from. To be able feelingly to come to a clear decision in this mystery is well; because the more the Christian is established, (and it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, and seasoned with salt,) for want of being established well in this point, how the young Christian is tossed to and fro, and up and down in his feelings for years, oftentimes wondering where the scene will end, and saying, with bitter anguish within, "If it be so, why am I thus?" until he at length, with my dear tried brother, begins to distinguish between the workings of his old, unrenewed nature and the new nature implanted by God himself within in regeneration, and by many repeated tokens of his love, sent from the throne and sealed with blood on his heart, and felt with joy and peace in his conscience, really so, he also becomes more and more established in his faithfulness, his covenant love and mercy, notwithstanding all his own unworthiness, sinfulness, and wretchedness, which he feels and groans under day by day, and day and night too.

It is a trying, keen, and painful state, I know well, which my favoured brother now is in; but let him not think himself singular, for his

"Sigh and his complaint
Is but the voice of every saint."

Painful as my friend's feelings may be, there is a state which he would find to be far worse, and much more dishonouring to God; I mean what the poet and my soul too call a "treacherous calm." No doubt you know a little of what that state is. I pray God you may never know it so much as I have known it in years that are past and gone. O the tremblings, the fears, the bewailings, the strugglings, the lamentations, the cryings, the groanings, the repentings that issue from the soul and are felt within, before the Lord grants deliverance! Those who have felt the same do, from their very hearts, know what an evil and bitter thing it is to sin against God, and dread the least departure of soul from the Lord, for fear it should grieve his dear Majesty. This I have learnt by painful experience; but, blessed be God, since that he has brought me into a wealthy place, has healed my backslidings, and has restored my soul into paths to dwell in; and sure I am that if ever there was a free-willer brought into this state, and thus delivered out of it by a living faith in the Redeemer's blood, it has made him a lover of God's free grace.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,

G. T. CONGREVE.

THE saints rejoice that by reason of the imputed righteousness of Christ, the law can demand nothing from them. (Rom. viii. 1.) What matter of joy is this!—*Flavel*.

I WILL NEVER TURN AWAY FROM THEM TO DO THEM GOOD.

My beloved Friend,—I received both your kind letters, and you may well be surprised I have not answered them. I know I need not make many apologies, as I know you possess a heart that can feel for the distressed.

Know, then, that I have been in the furnace almost all the year; afflicted in body, distressed in mind, and often ready to adopt the language of poor mistaken Jacob: "All these things are against me;" and since I received your last I have lost a dearly-beloved daughter, the loss of whom has almost upset my poor, dear, weak, and afflicted wife, as well as myself. I am forced now to cast my burden upon the Lord, for I have nowhere else to go; and sometimes my poor, distrustful heart is ready to say, "Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Will he be favourable no more?" Ah! This is my infirmity. But I will remember his former mercies, for they endure for ever. Though I am now like the poor disciples, sorrowing, yet Jesus told them he would turn their sorrow into joy, and that no man should take it from them, for he would see them again. O that the dear Lord may visit my poor, dark, mourning soul, turn my sorrow into joy, and gladden my heart with his special love-tokens, that I may be raised above this miserable world.

O how much I anticipated the pleasure of seeing you; but we often appoint, and the Lord sees it best to disappoint. The very day I had purposed to set off towards Lincolnshire, I had my things on, my little trunk packed up, and I had got to the door, when my friend Lamb's letter was put into my hand. I felt the disappointment, but I was enabled to believe it was all for the best; and I have seen the hand of my heavenly Father in it, that I might remain at home to witness the departure of my dearly-beloved daughter, who died a precious believer in a precious Jesus; so that I am not like those who mourn without hope. No, my dear friend, I rejoice without a doubt.

I should be extremely glad to know how my friend Lamb is. If you see him, tell him so. Whether I shall see him or you again is a very doubtful matter; and I seem to feel almost persuaded that, with some of my friends, it is a matter of indifference; which I am not at all surprised at. I am fully convinced that, in the opinion of some, I have been too often already. I have felt this for some time; so that I had entirely given up all thought of ever coming any more; but the unbounded kindness I received from my dear friends Mr. and Mrs. Lamb, made me anticipate a pleasure that I was sure to enjoy under their comfortable roof, having had so many happy hours there before. As for my friend Mr. Smith, I shall ever own the debt of gratitude I am under to him, for his kindness to me so many times. May my heavenly Father settle the account with him with a tenfold blessing. The same wish and prayer I feel towards you and your dear brother, who always paid me more attention than I ever considered myself deserving of.

This, my dear friend, has been a very trying year with me, afflicted in body and mind; yet blessed be my dear Lord, I have had the sweetest communion with him, so that I have been sometimes enabled to rejoice in tribulation, firmly relying upon, "Thus saith the Lord, I will never turn away from thee to do thee good." I am now, bless my God, pretty well in health; and though sometimes in a strait, and led to cry out, "Lord, undertake for me," my Father is pleased to put my faith into motion, and pour out upon me the unction of the Holy Spirit; and then I am happy.

I hope this poor scrawl will meet you and your dear mother well. If you see my friend Lamb, tell him as the pleasure of seeing him is now gone by, I hope to have the pleasure of hearing from him.

Wishing you, my much-esteemed friend, the blessings of the upper and the nether springs,

I remain, your sincere Friend and Brother in everlasting Bonds,
Sudbury, Oct. 10, 1826. DANIEL HERBERT.

A LETTER BY THE LATE WILLIAM TUFNELL.

My dear Brother in the Bonds of eternal Love,—Mercy and peace be with thee. Amen. These are covenant blessings, which we are called to the enjoyment of in Christ Jesus; but the first and greatest is love, the fountain from whence every grace and gift floweth, even the everlasting love of God. Of this river it has been my dear brother's privilege to drink freely; and having, through infinite mercy, been a partaker myself, we have mutually drunk into that union which can never be dissolved, in time or eternity, and the sweetness and power of which cannot be described, although it is the source of all our comforts here, and foundation of our hope; for "hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us." Here we have something then in us, upon which we can rest and trust, a reality, a substance. All that is in the world is imaginary, nothing but shadows and vanity. There is nothing real in our bodies, constantly changing, the shadow of life, and not life itself. Man walketh in a vain shadow; and all the relations in life are nothing better; but in Christ there is reality, for he is the substance of things hoped for. In him we have eternal life. In him we have salvation, a substance, for it is for ever and ever, a righteousness that shall never be abolished. Hence we read that the saints of old took joyfully the spoiling of their goods here, knowing that in heaven they had a better and enduring substance. The father of the faithful could not be satisfied with shadows, for he dwelt in the land of promise, in tabernacles with Israel and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; and we also, my brother, confess that we are strangers and sojourners upon earth, as were all our fathers; and for ever blessed be the God of our fathers, who hath led us forth in the footsteps of the flock, that we may be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Yes, for he hath bestowed the same faith upon us as he gave to them. It is by faith we walk and travel upon the high

mountains of Israel. It is by faith we follow Christ in the way of regeneration. We have been led step by step in the pathway of his sufferings and afflictions, and gone down with him even to death and the grave, where, having left our grave-clothes, even our corruptions and iniquities, we have ascended with him into the highest heavens, being clad with the garments of salvation, and covered with the robe of righteousness: "Their righteousness shall go forth as brightness, and their salvation as a lamp that burneth." This honour have all his saints.

My dear brother, I felt much gratified by the love-token (for such I considered it) which I received from you long since, and which, at the time, was very sweet unto me, being very savoury, and such as my soul loveth. I should attempt some apology, but my brother requireth none; for, as the elect of God, he hath put on bowels of mercy, and compassion, ready to forgive, as he himself is forgiven.

I hope, my dear brother, that you and your dear partner are in and have enjoyed a good share of health, both of body and soul, since we parted. I have great reason to be thankful on this score. The Lord hath not left me. I have gone forth constantly in his name since my return. We are a small but a united party, a peculiar party, that prefer substance to all the showy shadows that abound amongst professors.

And now that the God of all mercy may bless you and yours, and preserve you unto his heavenly kingdom, is the prayer of

Yours in the Lord,

East Burgholt, Sept. 3rd, 1851.

WM. TUFNELL.

INQUIRY.

Dear Mr. Editor,—Will you be so kind as to give an answer to the following inquiry: Can a man get a second time under the law after he has been experimentally delivered therefrom and brought into the blessed experience the apostle Paul speaks of in the eighth chapter of Romans, viz., "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit? For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death;" I say, can a man get a second time under the law in the same sense that he was under it before thus delivered, seeing it is thus written: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed?"

I remain, Dear Sir, Yours sincerely,

A DESPISED NAZARENE.

ANSWER.

Certainly not. We do not believe that after deliverance into the light, life, and liberty of the gospel a soul can come again under the law, so as to be under its curse as before. Nor is this meaning intended by those experimental preachers and writers who hold that a soul once delivered can get a second time under the law. They do not mean that it comes into the same spot as before, so as to get a second time under the curse of the law, and for all the work of the Spirit in deliverance to be undone; but that, through the power of temptation, the assaults of Satan, the burden of fresh-contracted guilt, the hidings of the Lord's

face, the dreadful corruptions of the heart all exposed to view, and the workings of a legal spirit—under all this a soul may fall into heavy bondage; and this they call, rightly or wrongly, coming a second time under the law. Why? Because the gospel certainly does not bring bondage, guilt, or condemnation, nor does the blessed Spirit, the Spirit of liberty, produce bondage, guilt, and fear. Yet who can deny that after deliverance the soul may fall into great darkness, and that by unwary walking we may bring a great load of guilt upon the conscience, with much hard and heavy bondage? We know that this is not the fruit of the gospel. Then what produces it? Are those good men wrong when they ascribe it to the law as working, and it can do nothing else, bondage and death? Does a legal spirit never work, do doubt and fear never possess the mind? Does the old veil never seem to gather back upon the heart? But all this does not mean that those so exercised come back to the same state as before deliverance, that the whole work of the Spirit is undone, that they are no longer washed, justified, or sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of their God, and that they are shut up under the curse and condemnation of the righteous law of God to come back into an unjustified, unpardoned state. But if we never can in any sense of the word again get under the law, why does Paul warn the Galatians against being “entangled *again* with the yoke of bondage?” (Gal. v. 1.) Why should he use the word “again” if there be no getting again entangled by it! That they had known liberty is plain from his words: “Stand fast in the liberty,” for how can a man stand fast in a thing which he has not got? But by “turning again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto they desired again to be in bondage,” they got entangled in a legal yoke. Mr. Hart held, it would seem, the same opinion:

“If thou, celestial Dove,
Thine influence withdraw,
What easy victims soon we fall
To conscience, wrath, and law!”

No one that we know has written on this subject like Mr. Huntington in his masterly sermon, “The Child of Liberty in Legal Bondage;” where he shows most clearly that a child of God can come a second time under the law. We have, therefore, felt tempted to insert a part of the conclusion of that unanswerable work.

“But we are told that a believer’s re-entanglement by the moral law is inconsistent with the abolition of it. Then this inconsistency is to be found in the word of God; and let them who are wise above what is written disprove it, or cast the blame there. That the law is abolished and done away in Christ, the Scriptures witness. That the Galatians who stood not fast in their liberty, but were leavened by legal leaven, were going to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage, is scriptural also. So that this inconsistency is founded upon the very letter of Scripture text. But, if there be no such thing as a yoke of bondage to re-entangle a believer, then the apostles were in no danger by these false brethren, nor the Galatians either. But this inconsistency is not only to be found in the Bible, but in the experience of God’s children. Luther found enough of it, as appears in his comment on the Galatians. And I have felt so much of it since I could call Jesus my Lord and my God, that I declare, in the presence of God, I would not go through it again for a thousand worlds. But it was God’s will that I should know law from gospel, not only in my head by the Scriptures, but in my heart by their different operations. And I much question if there is one child of God in this nation, twenty years old in grace, that has not felt this yoke, or at times been more or less influenced with a spirit of bondage.”

MEDITATIONS ON VARIOUS IMPORTANT POINTS OF OUR MOST HOLY FAITH.

I.

THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL.

(Continued from page 220.)

OUR readers will perhaps remember that the point at which we have now arrived in our present Meditations, is *the ends* for which the Ministry of the Gospel was established, and that we divided these ends into two—*ultimate* and *proximate*; the ultimate being the glory of God in the exaltation of his dear Son, the proximate, the benefit and blessing of the church. They will also call to mind that in examining the latter point—the proximate ends, we expressed our opinion that in no part of the New Testament were these ends so fully and clearly laid down as by the apostle Paul in Eph. iv. 8–16; and that we, therefore, purposed to confine ourselves to the opening of that portion of the word of truth, as the best and simplest way of elucidating the subject now before us.

In pursuance of that plan—for some degree of order is requisite in examining every important subject, we attempted in our last No. to unfold the meaning of Eph. iv. 12, in which the apostle intimates that there were three special ends to be accomplished by the ministry of “the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers,” whom the Lord sends, and whom he endues with power from on high. These three ends were “the perfecting of the saints, the work of the ministry, and the edifying of the body of Christ.” One of these ends, “the perfecting of the saints,” we have already examined.

2. We come now, therefore, to the second end laid down by the apostle: “*For the work of the ministry,*” which we shall endeavour in a similar way to unfold.

The expression is of a more general character than the preceding, and seems to be purposely employed so by the apostle, that it might take a more capacious grasp, and more fully embrace the whole of that wide and extensive service which is rendered to the church by the ministry of the servants of God. Whatever ministerial work, therefore, is done by any or all of the servants of Christ for the benefit and blessing of the church, whether much or little, whether performed by an apostle, or a prophet, or an evangelist, or a pastor, or a teacher, falls under this head, “the work of the ministry.”

Its two leading ideas are ministry and work, and these two combined in effective and sustained operation; not *work* simply, which might be uncalled for or misdirected, and therefore useless, if not positively mischievous, nor *ministry* simply, which might be office without service, a mere sinecure dignity without labour; but that union of proper qualification and actual work which makes a servant acceptable to his master and useful to all within the compass of his services. The idea is simple and easily intelligible, and yet an illustration may set it in a clearer light. In a large establishment, say a wealthy nobleman’s, there may be 50 or 60 servants, differing among themselves in rank, qualification, and situation; but each has

his fixed place and appointed work. None has intruded himself into the situation which he occupies; all serve one lord, who appoints each his work, and pays each his wages; and not one is there but for the honour or service of his master, and the advantage, comfort, and well being of the whole family. The figure, of course, is imperfect, as all figures necessarily must be; but it may serve as an illustration of what is intended by the expression, "the work of the ministry."

The first idea is that of "*work*," and that sound, honest, often hard, and usually efficient work. We have no idea of a lazy, slothful, indolent minister, and are very sure that such men, and it is to be feared there is an abundance of them in every sect and denomination, find no sanction for their laziness in the word of truth, and no approbation in the conscience or affections of the people of God. It is true that health, opportunities, spheres of activity and usefulness, gifts, abilities, and acceptance, and other both internal and external circumstances widely differ, even among the true servants of God, and therefore preclude the application of a fixed or rigid standard. We cannot, therefore, measure the work for the man, as we cannot measure the man for the work; but work there must be done by every professing servant of God, if he would not fall under the terrible sentence pronounced by the Lord of the house against the slothful and unprofitable servant Matt. xxv. 26-30. In this busy hive, work is the appointed lot of most; and work, when honest and not too fatiguing to body or mind, has its enjoyments as well as its profits. But no work is so honourable, so useful, so lasting, and so fruitful in consequences for time and eternity, as the work of the ministry. All other, however useful, excellent, or honourable, begins and ends with time; this alone, though it begins and is carried on in time, reaches into eternity.

The second idea is that of "*ministry*." This we have already explained as a service *for* men, but not *of* men. Let no servant of God so degrade himself, let no churches or deacons so degrade a real minister of Christ as to make him or consider him *their* servant. Let the wealthy deacons and rich members of churches have their men-servants and their maid-servants, their grooms and gardeners; and let their business men have their clerks, assistants, porters, and errand-boys, whom they may take on or take off, whom they may hire and dismiss as they choose. The work of these is time-work, and their service time-service; but their minister, if he be a man of God, is neither their time-servant nor a time-server. He watches for their souls as one that must give account, and labours not for the meat that perisheth, but that which endures unto everlasting life. If a church be so highly favoured as to have for its minister a man of God, let it esteem him very highly in love for his work's sake; and let him, on his side, not presume on his position, or attempt any other rule than the rule of love. To be a lord over God's heritage is as much out of place in him as to degrade him into their servant is out of place in them. Both are equally unscriptural; both will cause strife and division, and probably end in separation.

The work to be done is both great and various. It requires, therefore, corresponding labourers. No one man can do equally well every part of the work. Each has his own work to do, and each man will do his own work best. These are simple truths,—truths which in theory almost every one will assent to, and yet in practice how continually are they forgotten or departed from. What a monopoly of gifts, usefulness, and acceptability some men seem disposed to claim to themselves; how prone to surround themselves with a little knot of friends and admirers; how jealous or suspicious of other ministers; how ready to speak against them, especially if any of their people are disposed to favour them; and how they will treat, almost as personal enemies, the very best people if they cannot or do not receive their ministry. Such conduct surely manifests great pride or great ignorance. Look at the greatness and variety of the work to be done, and then see whether any one man, or ten men, can arrogate to themselves such exclusive pretensions. Consider the wisdom, grace, love, and power of the great Head of the church; view the wide extent and scattered character of his kingdom; think of the variety of cases which his people present; bear in mind their trials, temptations, afflictions, and varied circumstances, and then ask, Who or what must that man be who can minister to all these people, meet all these cases, and do all the work of the ministry? A variety of gifts is as needful as a certain number of labourers. Some are more qualified for the first work,—calling sinners to repentance. Their work lies chiefly in pulling down the strongholds of sin and Satan, showing man's state by nature before God, declaring the insufficiency of all creature worth or works, and proclaiming the necessity and nature of the new birth. Others are more qualified to build up the saints on their most holy faith by preaching clearly and experimentally the glorious doctrines of grace. Others can enter more fully and deeply into the experience of God's poor, tried, and afflicted family. Some are more searching and discriminating, and take forth in a bold, faithful, and separating ministry the precious from the vile; others are more for comforting the cast-down, and speaking a word in season to the soul that is weary. Some can enforce the precept without legality, others preach doctrines without dryness, and others handle experience without sameness. Each has his peculiar work to do, an appointed place to occupy, a people for whom he is specially adapted, and a field in which he alone can effectually labour. We are apt to judge too much by outward appearances. Because this man has not the gifts or the abilities, or the experience or the peculiar line of that man, or even almost because he has not the manner, or the delivery, or the mode of handling his subject of our favourite minister, are we to cast him aside and slight him and his communication? If we have good reason to believe that he is a partaker of the grace of God, preaches what he knows and has experienced, has a sufficient gift to lead us to believe that the Lord has opened his mouth, manifests by his life, conduct, and conversation that his eye is single to God's glory, and is in any measure

owned and blessed in the work, we are bound to receive him as a servant of Christ, even if in many points his ministry may seem in our view defective, or not specially profitable or acceptable to ourselves. This exercise of Christian judgment, this willingness to lay aside narrow, prejudiced, and contracted views, this rising above party spirit, this free acting of that charity which hopeth all things and believeth all things, by no means implies that false charity which thinks well of every minister, or that superstitious credulity which believes every spirit. Nor does it preclude the exercise of our judgment as to the grace, gifts, abilities, and usefulness of the true servants of God. There is a middle, though a narrow, path between prejudiced, bigoted exclusiveness and false charity, between party spirit and wide armed reception, between the shutting up of ears and heart against all but two or three, and that foolish simplicity which believeth every word that drops from a pulpit. (Prov. xiv. 15.) "The ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat." (Job. xxxiv. 3.) We are bidden to "try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world;" (1 John iv. 1;) and yet we are "to know them which labour among us, and are over us in the Lord, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake." (1 Thess. v. 12.) We, therefore, need special grace in this matter to receive none whom the Lord rejects, and reject none whom the Lord receives, but be so guided by wisdom, and so influenced by love, that we may walk before God with the answer of a good conscience, and walk before men with meekness of wisdom.

3. The third end is, "*the edifying of the body of Christ.*" To "edify," we need scarcely remark, means to build up: "the body of Christ" is the church which he hath purchased with his own blood. The Holy Spirit here has united two figures to convey one idea. The church of Christ is sometimes compared to a building, as in that beautiful passage: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Eph. ii. 19-22.) Peter uses the same figure, "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house." (1 Pet. ii. 4, 5.) We have already shown in our remarks upon "the perfecting of the saints," that the work of hewing the stones out of the quarry and squaring them into shape, and fitting them together into the spiritual house was an especial end of the ministry of the gospel. This, therefore, we need not repeat. The figure of a human body, as descriptive of the church of Christ, is no less common than that of a house or temple. We shall see more of its beauty and propriety presently, but for the present, let us quote the apostle's words: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body;

so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member but many." (1 Cor. xii. 12-14.) Now this body of Christ—his mystical, as distinguished from his actual and personal, body, has to be built up, that is, the various members are to be brought together, united to each other, and thus grow up in harmonious concord. Christ is the ever-living Head, (Eph. v. 23; Col. ii. 19,) who supplies out of his own fulness all the need of the various members; but they have first to be brought together and then to grow together. It is for this reason that the two figures are blended into one. The natural figure of a body with its various members would not convey a right conception of the way in which the saints become partakers of the benefits and blessings of Christ as a covenant Head, because in the human body all the members are at once and at the same time in union with the head and each other. This indeed is true as regards the eternal union between Christ and his people, for they were all chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and united to him by an act of the Father's sovereign good pleasure. But as they are brought into being successively in time, so they can only be vitally and spiritually united to him in their time state. For this reason, therefore, the figure of a building is chosen as indicative of the successive addition of stones to a temple. But as stones in a natural building, when brought together, do not grow as the members of a body grow from childhood to manhood, the Holy Ghost has blended the two figures—building implying successive additions of stones, a body implying a living growth, which members have but stones have not. This short but perhaps not very clear explanation will perhaps throw light upon the expression, "the edifying of the body of Christ," as an end accomplished by the ministry of the word.

The work of the ministry generally may be divided into two great branches—the calling of sinners, and the building up of saints. It is chiefly, though not exclusively, the latter which is intended by the expression, "the edifying of the body of Christ." But how is the body built up by the ministry?

1. These young converts have first to be *instructed*. They are usually very ignorant, even of the first elements of our most holy faith; but if they are of the right stamp, and the work of conviction in their souls is genuine, they are generally very teachable. They are brought as it were into a new world. They word of truth may have been known by them in the letter, but its hidden spiritual and experimental meaning was altogether hidden from their eyes. Much self-righteousness and legality of spirit often cleave very closely to their skirts, and the very freeness of gospel grace, until the law has done its work upon their consciences, and burned up their wood, hay, and stubble, hinders its cordial reception. Now to souls thus exercised and distressed, full of guilt, bondage, and misery, and yet entangled in a legal, self-righteous spirit which only makes their chains heavier, what a blessing is a living, experimental, clear, enlightened

ministry! What good hearers such burdened souls usually are; with what eagerness do they listen, with what an appetite do they feed, with what a memory do they retain the word of life as it falls from the pulpit. These are not like many old hearers, too proud to be taught, and though they have not the judgment and discernment of more established believers, yet they may well by their life, zeal, warmth, and earnestness, put their elders to shame. Every minister, therefore, who seeks to approve himself to God, and be made a blessing to his people, should consider *instruction* a very important part of his ministry, and should endeavour to put before the people the truths of the gospel in the clearest, plainest, and most consistent possible manner. He should, therefore, be continually reading and studying the Scriptures, mingling his reading with prayer and supplication for divine teaching, and be satisfied with nothing short of a gracious, feeling, experimental knowledge of the truth in his own soul, as he can then speak with authority and power; and where there is a clearness of views, there will generally be a corresponding clearness of statement. A minister of truth should also seek to have very clear ideas upon the grand doctrines of our most holy faith, based upon a living experience of them, such as the Trinity, the Deity and Sonship of the blessed Lord, the Deity and personality of the Holy Ghost, the Person of Christ as God-man, his holy and sacred humanity, his bloodshedding, obedience, and death, his resurrection, ascension, present intercession, and future coming,—in a word, every point connected with the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. Unless he himself has clear, consistent views of the grand fundamental principles of truth, how can he either preach it clearly or defend it successfully? Under his confused, cloudy, perplexed and perplexing ministry, error will lie snug and undisturbed, even gracious living hearers be tossed about and unestablished, and little union felt or known with him or each other.

2. Secondly, the living family *have to be fed*.

We have remarked that there is a growth of the members of the mystical body of Christ, and that to conduce to and promote this growth is to edify or build up the body of Christ. As in the natural, so in the spiritual body, this growth much depends on the nature and quality of the food supplied to it. Let the food given to the natural body be thin, watery, deficient in those peculiar elements of nutrition which supply the continual wasting of the bodily tissues, and the consequence will be emaciation of the whole frame. This is especially the case in childhood and youth, when the growth of the whole body and of its various members is going on, and the future man or woman is being built up. The difference at that period of life between scanty, insufficient, unnutritious food and an ample supply of sound, wholesome, nourishing diet is a matter of illness or health, debility or vigour, and, in their consequences, of death and life. So in the building up of the mystical body of Christ, the difference between a thin and watery, unnutritious ministry and one full of sound, solid, wholesome, nourishing food is immense. The word of God speaks of "milk" and "strong meat," milk for babes,

(Heb. v. 14; 1 Pet. ii. 2,) and strong meat for men. (1 Cor. iii. 2.) Both these kinds of diet contain the largest portion of the elements of nutrition, and severally suit the digestive organs of infancy and manhood. Such, then, should be the ministry of the gospel, milk and meat; not London milk, weak and watery, but good, rich, new country milk, as it comes from the cow, full of cream and cheese, and meat sound and healthy, well bred and well fed; not White-chapel beef, snatched by the butcher's knife from pleuro-pneumonia or the cattle plague. We do not want eloquence in the pulpit, but we do want food. Jael brought forth her milk and butter "in a lordly dish," for she was feeding the proud lord and master of 900 chariots of iron; but we can well dispense with "the lordly dish," if the bowl at one end of the table be filled with good milk for the babes, and the dish at the other, where the men sit, has on it a sound and juicy joint. But London milk in a porcelain bowl will starve the babe, and Whitechapel meat in a china dish will poison the man. Do we not love to see our children grow up stout and strong? But they need for this good food, and a good supply of it. O brother ministers, do you think sometimes about the food that you supply the children of God with? Has it nourished, is it nourishing your own soul? Can you say of what you preach, "These truths have fed, and do still feed my soul? Christ, his Person, his work, his blood, his righteousness, his dying love, his beauty, blessedness, and suitability; his mercy, pity, and compassion; what I have seen, felt, and known of him in his presence and power, as all my salvation and all my desire; this is all my life, all my hope, and all my happiness. I must, therefore, speak well of his name, exalt him to the utmost of my power, and commend him to every poor sensible sinner who is pining after him as the child after the breast, or the starving man for food. 'Honey and milk are under his tongue;' 'his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed.' And having drunk his milk and wine, and eaten his meat, I can speak well of them both, and never wish to set any other provision before the dear family of God." This is the preaching which God will own and bless; and though it may be despised by the great bulk of professors, it will be prized by the poor and needy, hungering and thirsting children of God.

3. Another thing desirable, if not absolutely necessary, to edify the body of Christ is a *suitable and seasonable variety* in the food supplied. The natural body requires for its due nourishment variety of food. The constituent elements of what is eaten remain the same, or it would not be nutritious; but, without some degree of variety, food, after a time, becomes rather loathed than loved. Our poor soldiers, under that red tape system which ties men up like a lawyer's brief, when not on foreign service had boiled beef served to them at their mess day by day till their very stomachs loathed the sight and the smell. The children of Israel ate quails in the wilderness till the meat came out of their nostrils and became loathsome unto them. (Num. xi. 20.) Should there not be some corresponding variety in the ministry of the word? What a variety there is in the

Bible! Take the whole range from Genesis to Revelation. How consistent, how uniform in doctrine, but how varied in detail. It is thus uniform in conception, but multiform in expression. Without unity of thought there would be confusion, if not contradiction; without variety of expression there would be not only a wearisome sameness, but a deficiency of instruction. The amazing variety of the Bible is not only charming, as ever presenting some new feature of heavenly truth, but most instructive and edifying. So in the approved works of our most esteemed Christian writers, such as Bunyan, Owen, Huntington, what a fulness of abounding variety. Should not the ministry have a good measure of this? The food that it supplies may be varied, and yet be good food still. Milk can be given to children in more ways than one; meat for men need not be always mutton, and least of all the same piece and the same exact mode of cooking. So in the ministry of the word, there may be, and should be, variety—not a variety *of* truth but a variety *in* truth. Prayer is a part of the ministry; but how wearisome to hear the same prayer over and over and over again. We condemn forms of prayer; yet how does the same prayer repeated again and again differ from a mere printed form? The chief value of extemporaneous prayer is that it enables the minister to pour forth his whole soul before God, as the blessed Spirit helps his infirmities and gives him utterance. He thus, as mouth for his gracious hearers, expresses the desires of their souls, and they can silently and sweetly unite with him as he presents his own and their mutual supplications before the throne. But when they know beforehand almost every word of his prayer; when there is no enlargement of heart and mouth, no entering into the numerous and varied wants, feelings, exercises, and desires of their souls, his prayer becomes at length but a wearisome, burdensome, unprofitable formula—words, and nothing but words. And as this is true of the prayer, so is it true and more than true of the preaching. We want no novelty in doctrine or experience; we are well satisfied with the good old beaten way. We want no startling, still less no sensational preaching. We want no juggler with his cup and balls to astonish our weak minds with the wonderful interpretations which he can put upon God's word, and no merry-andrew to entertain us with jests and anecdotes. Nor do we want the eloquent orator, who perhaps may break down in one of his finest passages which he has well conned over and learnt by heart; nor do we require a dry doctrinalist, or a contentious disputer, or a personal railer. But we do sadly want the sound, sober, well-taught man of God, whose grace we see in his heart and life, and whose gift we feel in the power and savour of his ministry. Our own belief is that whenever God sends a man to preach his word, he always furnishes him with a suitable gift; and that one mark of this gift is such a seasonable measure of variety as shall make his ministry from time to time a living word, springing out of and kept up by a living inward experience of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. We shall hope to show in our next No. the fruits of such a ministry as we have ventured to describe in this and our preceding Article.

SEPTEMBER 1, 1866.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

SEPTEMBER, 1866.

MATT. V. 6; 2 TIM. I. 9; ROM. XI. 7; ACTS VIII. 37, 38; MATT. XXVIII. 19.

A SERMON PREACHED

BY THE LATE MR. BIRCH, OF CRANBROOK, 1ST MARCH,
1857.

“Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.”—ISA. XXX. 26.

(Concluded from page 232.)

DAVID, when he smote Moab, “measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive.” (2 Sam. viii. 2.) Under one or other of these two lines you and I and all men will be found to be ranged one day. As sure as ever literal David dealt with Moab, so will the true David deal with all men. They that are written to life will be kept alive, and they who were before of old ordained to condemnation will be the subjects of the second death. You see here what instruction may be gathered from the light of the moon. Mount Gerizim is still found; the light of the moon is become as the light of the sun. Gerizim signifies “cutters;” and who cut so sharp, who cut so deep as spiritual preachers? God makes the word “in their mouth fire, and the people wood.” Vessels of wood are burnt, and of earth are hewn and broken to pieces; (Hos. vi. 5;) while the elect sinner is cut, by the powerful preaching of the word, out of the olive tree which is wild by nature. (Rom. xi. 24.) This is no more than what was promised (Isa. xli. 15): “Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff.” O what havoc has the Lord made at times in Satan’s kingdom by the preaching of the word! He has not once or twice said to a preacher, “Thou art my battle-axe and weapons of war.” (Jer. li. 20.) Yes, says Paul, “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.” (2 Cor. x. 4.) Such, when full of power, do mighty execution; they, like Samson, slay “heaps upon heaps with the jaw-bone of an ass.” The word of God cuts when applied by the Spirit. The witnesses (Rev. xi.) have fire proceeding out of their mouth, which devours their enemies. There is that speaketh like the pierc-

ings of a sword; (Prov. xii. 18;) but though it be so, yet the tongue of the wise is health; and far better are the wounds of a friend than the kisses of an enemy—far better to be faithfully dealt with in this world than to be daubed with untempered mortar, and lost for ever. The language of the honest-hearted sinner is, "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness."

Now you see what light, what instruction was given by the Father of mercies to his children of old. He has never been wanting either in love or in power; he has always been a present help; he has never despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and his people have always been an afflicted people, (Zeph. iii. 12,) and always will be, down to the end of time. "But when he cried unto him, he heard." Let these cutters, these spiritual cutters, ever be my companions in the house of my pilgrimage, because they never cut at what proceeds from life in the soul, but only at that which is really injurious to me and dishonourable to my God, who is the God of the living. These cutters are still found, though they may be rare; for ever since the star that fell from heaven, Antichrist, or Popery, has opened the bottomless pit, there has arisen such a horrible smoke, (Rev. ix. 3,) that the sun and the air have been darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit; the locusts, those swarms of Popish priests and equally vile Protestant ministers, have filled the air with their deceit; and spiritual ministers and spiritual worshippers are but rare. The men that have not the seal of God on their foreheads are given to these locusts to devour, and they are at this day manifestly at work devouring their thousands; but, blessed be God, they shall not hurt the servants of the living God, (Rev. vii. 3,) who have the seal of God in their foreheads.

I might enlarge upon these things, and show how and in what a singular manner the Lord favoured his people of old. But I must hasten to the other part of my subject, and say something of the new dispensation which has this glorious title annexed to it: "And the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days." This is perfectly true, and as true at this day as it ever was; for truth never varies. Paul will bear witness to this truth; and we cannot have recourse to one who better knew the value of both dispensations, having himself passed through them and known the beauty, glory, and excellence, and felt the power of the gospel as much or more than any. (2 Cor. iii. 7.) "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven on stones, was glorious, how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. Seeing, then, we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech, and not as Moses, who put a veil over his face." But, say some, we have never seen such glorious beauty in the new dispensation as you speak of, and seem to think is in it. Shall I tell you the reason? The veil, the thick, impenetrable veil, is still on your heart, and will remain there until the Lord the Spirit destroy it: (2 Cor. iii. 16, 17, and Isa. xxv. 7:) "He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast [covered]

over all people and the veil that is spread [veiled] over all nations;" a double covering, a double veil. He alone can do it; and then you will see, as Isaiah did, the super-excellence of the ministration of the Spirit. But let us ask, Was the light of the sun entirely unknown to them of old? I cannot see how that can be proved, seeing David (Ps. lxxxiv. 11) says: "The Lord God is a sun and a shield;" but, comparatively speaking, there was but little of the glorious realities known; for only consider, they of old, according to their dispensation, entered but once a year, and that representatively, into the holiest of all; and that a high priest, made after the law of a carnal commandment, and often, very often, not a saint or sanctified person or vessel of mercy; that might or might not be; but a mere sinful man. But now every real believer has the privilege of access with confidence into the holiest of all at all times. This is the high privilege of the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty, of all the heirs of promise; and if you know not what these things mean, what proof have you that you have any part or lot in the matter? Remember that this prophet speaks of this sun as the portion of all the saved, as well as John, who says: "And the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it." (Rev. xxi. 24.) The prophet says, "Thy sun," speaking of gospel days, "shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee." (Isa. lx. 19, 20.) Again, Malachi, speaking more of gospel days than of his own, says, "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." (Mal. iv. 2.) It is only to those that fear him, that tremble at his word, to the poor and the meek, that this promise is made, and to none else; and if you come not up to this description, there can be no hope that you will ever see this glorious light. Did the Sun show himself of old? Much more will he show himself in these latter days. And so the Lord Jesus speaks, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear; for I tell you of a truth that many righteous men have desired to hear the things which ye have heard, and have not heard them, and to see the things which ye see, and have not seen them." (Luke x. 23; Matt. xiii. 16.) "Prophets, kings, and righteous men." I ask you, Did all men see that blessed Sun when he arose on the benighted world in the days of his flesh? O, no; few, very few; the greater part saw nothing in him: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." None of the princes of this world knew the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom. (1 Cor. ii. 8.) He was not pleased to reveal it to them; for, had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; that is, had they known the wisdom of God in a mystery. There were a few, and but a few, who could say, "We beheld his glory, as of the only begotten of the Father." (John i. 14.) And so it is now. If God send a gospel minister, such as Mr. Huntington, how few are savingly benefited by it; this I know. Has this light had a transforming power in your soul? If it has not, what

has it done for you? I fear but few of you are crying out as one of old did: "Thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth." (Ps. lxxx. 1.) It is an awful truth, written by Amos, (viii. 9,) "And it shall come to pass in that day that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day." The sun went down upon the false prophets, the Jewish scribes and pharisees; and the earth, or earthly-minded men, were darkened in the clearest day that ever shone, when he shone in his meridian splendour, that is, in the ministry of the Lord himself, and in the ministry of the twelve apostles. O how good was it for Peter to be on the mount when the Lord's face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. (Matt. xvii. 2; Luke ix. 29.) And this transformation is not confined to him; no, he communicates it to his poor, needy, unworthy disciples; they share in his bounty, as we read: "But we, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory." (2 Cor. iii. 18.) The word "changed" is the same as what we translate "transfigured." (Matt. xvii. 2.) This is knowing the gospel in the power of it; and unless you know it as such, you know it not at all. This being so set forth, the soul that is in earnest is continually reaching forward to these things, the things that are before; (Phil. iii. 13;) and such a one must expect to meet with horrible darkness from his own dark heart, than which nothing is darker. You shall never have the true light granted you without being made well to know to whom you are indebted for it, and that you are brutishness itself: "Every man is brutish in his knowledge." (Jer. x. 14.) Seven is a number of perfection. We read of "the seven Spirits which are before the throne," which is figurative language respecting the Holy Spirit, for he it is that is meant: "And from the seven Spirits that are before his throne." (Rev. i. 4.) We read of "seven lamps of fire burning before the throne," (Rev. iv. 5,) of "seven candlesticks and seven churches." This word "sevenfold" shows that that which is perfect is come, and he that is perfect, and whose work is perfect, (Deut. xxxii. 4,) is come. A sevenfold light reflected from the heat of seven days must be astonishing. A soul that is freezing under the north pole, as we all, when taught of God, feel ourselves to be, must consider this heat as most desirable; and nothing will satisfy him till he feels the genial influences of the Sun upon his heart. But if you are in the insensible sleep of death, it matters not where you are; a dead corpse feels neither cold nor heat. But here let us ask this faithful minister of Christ, this true servant of the most high God, whose glory he had seen in the temple? When in an especial manner is this light to be manifested? God does all things well and wisely; he would have ample justice done to his law by the obedience and sufferings of Christ before these great things took place. The Holy Spirit is ever consistent with himself. It is "in the day when the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their [his] wound," or the wound of his smiting. Now this may be looked upon in a twofold light. The binding up of the breach of his people was virtually done when the blessed Redeemer hung on

the tree and said, "It is finished." Then was the breach which had so long been kept open finally closed. Sin was the bar. "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God." (Isa. lix. 2.) But when sin was put away, God and man could come together again:

"God and man by him can meet,
And never sunder."

If sin is put away, if righteousness is imputed, the breach is bound up. Nothing can injure our souls but unappeased wrath and unatoned guilt; let these be gone, and we are safe. He healed the stroke of his wound virtually; but still this is not all that is meant by the Holy Spirit in this prophet. This very prophet knew experimentally what the breach was when he heard the voice cry, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts." He knew also what it was to have that breach bound up by him who wounds and who heals; and this judgment which had passed on him in his own soul was a light in all his future prophesying. (Isa. li. 4.) No preacher like him who knows the breach and the binding. The stroke of his wound is the wound produced by the Lord smiting the soul: "He shall smite the earth by the rod of his mouth;" "He shall cause conviction to be wrought with equity for the meek of the earth." (Isa. xi. 4.) Then it is that the soul sincerely seeks the healing which can alone come by faith. Now this glorious light is reserved for that day in which every elect sinner has Christ revealed to him. Some have him more manifestly revealed than others; but all have it in a saving way. This is the day spoken of here; a blessed day indeed, when all the thoughts are gathered to Jesus Christ, the Friend of lost and worthless sinners; a glorious day it is; and although you may afterwards fall into great darkness, yet where he has once shone he will shine again.

"If once the love of Christ you feel,
Upon your heart impress'd,
The mark of that celestial seal
Can never be erased."

May what I have said stir you up into a diligent inquiry into these matters, for they deeply concern you. If you make a mistake here, it is a mistake for eternity; for "where the tree falleth, there it shall be." (Eccles. xi. 3.) I would not have you sit down contented, short of a full satisfaction on this head. Many and most are contented with a very superficial acquaintance. O, what fools! what losers! Can such be said to follow the counsel of the wise man, Solomon: "Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister, and call understanding thy kinswoman?" (Prov. vii. 4.) What, say you, is the meaning of those words? Answer: Aim at the nearest, closest, intimate communion with the Lord Jesus; make him what he is, "All in all;" (Col. iii. 11;) all *to* you as well as *for* you. In the pardon of our sins and the renewing of our nature consists all our present and future happiness.

WORTHY is that rod of our warmest caresses which beats us off from our sins and dislodges them from our bosoms.—*Daniel Rowland.*

A TESTIMONY FOR THE LORD OF LIFE AND GLORY.

(Concluded from page 239.)

One Sabbath I went out for a walk, groaning under my burden, when these words were very sweet to me: "They that go forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless return again with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them." My Beloved seemed to have put in his hand by the hole of the door; my bowels were moved for him; but he had withdrawn himself; yet I was kept for a long time. I often compared myself to a drowning man, sometimes almost out, then sinking deeper than ever; yet I could not move without him.

After this, all my children had the fever, and I was afraid they would die; but they all recovered.

After this I was much alone, and had secret communion at the throne of grace. The fear of the Lord enabled me to walk tenderly and at times to rebuke some for sin. This brought many enemies, and they tried to get me out of my situation, sending anonymous letters to my master, that I left the mill on the Sabbath and did not come home till Monday. This was partly true, as sometimes it was raining, and after evening service I would come part of the way home and lie down at a brother's house and get home early in the morning, but never to neglect my work. My master told me I should go to the nearest village and not to town, or lose my place. My master being a professor and mixed up with the itinerant or academy parsons wished me to have a hand in it. I told him I had been there and could not hear, as the truth was not preached there. He said if I spoke against them I spoke against him, and Paul said, "Servants, obey your masters." I told him I was his servant in temporal things and would do all that lay in my power, morning, noon, or night, to serve him; but in eternal things I had but one Master, the Lord Jesus; and as the Lord had shown me the emptiness of forms of worship and had given me to feel what it was to be tried, lost, and condemned as a breaker of his laws in the court of conscience, and revealed redeeming love and mercy to me, I desired to meet with the living family of God, where I had often found it good to be. This was the only form I wanted. "Well," he said, "I will give you one week to consider of it. You shall go where I wish or lose your place." I said, "I believe the Lord has set the bounds of my habitation. I am in his hands, and I never would sell my conscience for a morsel of bread; and I bless his dear name I can trust him for time and eternity, and may the Lord influence you in the matter." These things I said with tears, and left the office with a clear conscience, as all fear was taken away whilst there; but after I left I had many fears, among which as I was poor and had several small children if I was discharged what should I do? The next Saturday I went in again according to orders, begging the Lord to keep me. I went into a little room joining the office for a few minutes, took a Bible that lay on the table, and begged

the Lord to give me one word before I went in. I then opened the Bible. The first word that met my eyes was this: "I will put my hook in his nose, and turn him back by the way which he came." I felt in a moment the Lord was gone in before me. I went and knocked. The master said, "Come in." He was never more affable or agreeable than at that time, and said nothing to me on the subject. Thus it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.

Before this took place, I had a dream, which told me something was coming. I dreamt there came a strong wind and blew the house I lived in right over. I was outside looking on, much alarmed. Then came another wind and blew it up again, and all was well as before. Twelve months afterwards I had this word much on my mind, "Son of man, prepare thy stuff for removal, for this is a rebellious house." Two men laid many things to my charge which they could not prove. They laid a trap for me but fell into it themselves. However, I was removed to another place, for the same master, and then I was near to the means of grace. The two men were afterwards discharged. One of them went into the union, and the other went to America. My master disliked me on account of my religion, though he liked me as a workman. He treated me cruelly for a time. His very step would turn my bowels, and I believe he would have discharged me, but the Lord suffered him not.

O the deep sinkings and soul risings I felt in that place for weeks under the hidings of his dear face. I have sunk so low I have thought I was going out of my mind, and have washed my head with cold water to keep down the inflammation; and then again he has appeared, that I have wept for joy. I was obliged to take my meals by myself and hold sweet communion in a secret place, unknown to any one. At times I wanted to drop the body and go home. Yes, I have gone through the streets of Bristol with my fingers in my ears, for I could not bear to hear a person speak; and if a drop is so sweet, what must the fountain be, to bathe in a sea of love where there is neither bottom, bound, nor shore? But as soon as the Lord hides his face, my soul is in trouble again, and I begin to fear whether I am deceived or not, whether I have had sparks of my own kindling. I am that poor weak creature, I am afraid of all my sorrows and feel without him I have no light, no love, nothing but bonds and misery, a burden to myself, and all around me is confusion and death.

The foreman and clerk left and asked me to go with them, as they were going into business for themselves. This led me to inquire of Him who has said, "Commit thy way unto the Lord, and he will direct thy steps." I could get no direct answer till the day I had to say "Yes," or "No." When the men were gone to tea, I went out into a secret place and there I was shown and fully satisfied it was the Lord's will for me to go. This was much on my mind: "A good man's steps are ordered by the Lord." I went with them, and was with them for four years, or thereabouts.

One thing I forgot to mention. Whilst in my last place the poet's words followed me:

"Happy's the man that bears the stroke
Of his chastising God,
Nor stubbornly rejects his yoke,
Nor faints beneath his rod."

This came over and over again. I said to a good man, "I think something is coming upon me, because of the words." The next day my hand was caught in the machine, almost disabling my left hand for life. I was seven weeks out of work and expected a lock-jaw; but, bless his dear name, the Lord was better than all my fears, and I do hope sanctified the stroke to my soul, bringing me closer home.

My two masters did not carry on business, and the landlord carried it on in my name till it was let, or rather I carried it on for him, as he left it wholly with me. When the shop was taken, I was asked to stop with the party who took it. This I agreed to do if he would grant me one thing; that was, one evening in the week to leave at 7 o'clock, as I had been engaged for some time past in meeting with some that love and fear God. He refused me that privilege, and I left, believing the Lord would open a door, for it was my meat and drink to meet with them that loved and feared God. I had a wife and five children, and to my knowledge not £5 in the world. With this I began business, and the Lord stirred up many friends to help me. Here I proved that the gold and silver were the Lord's and all hearts in his hand, and he can make them as he sees fit. I bought and sold tobacco, and having but two rooms, found the place too small, yet was afraid to move, though I had many cries to the Lord to open a door for me. I begged of the Lord to give me a little shop. I went out one day and saw one I thought would just do, and had a strong impression the Lord would give it to me. I went in and asked if it was to be let. The person asked me why I asked that question, as there was no paper in the window. They said they were doing a good trade, being milliners, and they had no intention of leaving it. A day or two after this I passed the shop again, to see if there was a paper up to be let, but there was not, and they were all busy at work. Still my cry went up, and I believed the Lord would give it to me. I think within a week I was walking in my garden, thinking over my path, when my wife called me and said some one wanted me. I went in doors, and, to my surprise, saw the very persons I saw in the shop. They asked me if I was the person that wanted to take it. I said, "Yes." They said their brother was come home from sea and wished them to leave; and if I liked I could have the shop. The thing was settled, and there I went. As soon as they were gone, my wife said, "What will you do to stock it?" I had no money, but that word came, "Fear not; the Lord will provide." This broke me down. I mentioned it to my wife and I wept like a child, for I was sure the Lord would provide. The next day or so, my old master, who had broken

up, called upon me, and offered almost all that I wanted, even to scales and weights, without the money, until I could pay him. This was without asking. After this a person came and offered to lend me £5. This set me up at once. Here I saw the Lord's hand. The Lord blessed my labour and enabled me to pay them all within six months. "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes." This was among the "all things." This provided me with the means to come to Australia.

But I will mention one or two answers to prayer that took place when I was with my old master. For many years I was troubled with a pain in my side, which was quite a burden for years. When walking, I was forced to press hard with my thumb to get a little ease. When out one night, I was thinking on the omniscience and omnipresence of Jehovah, and he knew my bones and my sinews, for he made me, and he knew my pain; but to ask the eternal God such a great thing was to me almost presumption. I stood still for a moment and could not speak, when this passed through my mind, "Do not be angry with a poor worm. There is nothing too hard for thee. If thou wilt, I know thou canst remove the pain." In a moment it was gone. I stood astonished, and it seemed too much to believe that the eternal God should hear the internal cry of a crawling worm of the earth; but it was removed from that moment; and though 15 years have passed and gone, I am as free from it as one who never had it. That spot is a sacred one to me, and with a solemn reverence I would humbly hope he spoke into my soul there.

I forgot to mention the Lord's preserving mercy to me in my last place. Our jack, or force pump, of our boiler was in a corner, pent in by the fly-wheel, over a cistern of hot water. I used to get inside to take out the plunger to clear the valve. I was just getting in when my son said, "Father, why don't you try to do it outside?" "Well," I said, "I don't think I can; but I will try." The moment I loosed the screw and took out the plunger, the boiler formed a syphon. The hot water and steam soon filled the engine-house. My son and I both escaped unhurt. Had I gone, as usual, inside the wheel, I could not have escaped; but must have been scalded to death. Here the Lord was about my path in keeping me from the jaws of death through the means of my son.

I remember one time sinking very low through giving up my faith, or at least giving way to another's testimony. This person's testimony gave way and down I sank fathoms, as I had looked upon her to be a highly favoured one, and I felt before her as the least of all saints. This taught me not to lean, no, not on the word of a prophet, even if he came with the word of the Lord, if it be contrary to the testimony the Lord has given me. I find one of the old prophets paid by his life for this and it had well nigh cost me mine; but it completely cured me from leaning on the testimony of another. All my journey through I had been prone to this, often wanting to know what a saint of God thought of me. Here I was leaning on an arm of flesh, instead of leaning on the Lord. All the testimonies of mortals to me are but as a feather, and I can say, "Whom have I

in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that my soul desires but thee." His voice never gives an uncertain sound.

This is one of the dealings of the Lord with me, that has weaned me from mortals, and brought me from leaning on either the good or bad opinions of others, only on God alone.

Another circumstance which has in some measure brought me to look and lean on the Lord alone, both for body and soul, just crosses my mind. When the cholera broke out in the city of Bristol, where I lived, I was much alarmed, seeing many die and death all around me. O! Solemn thought! Apparently well in the morning, dead and buried in the evening. This brought me to where I have been many times, to stand on the brink, and, as it were, peep over into eternity, not knowing a moment that my time would come. Many said, "Do this," and "Do that." Still I felt life and death were in the Lord's hands. I wanted a word of God to lean upon, the God of Israel alone to be my trust, and not on this or that to keep it off, or to cure it when it came; and I certainly was astonished to see some I envied with almost unshaken confidence so much carried away like the world with secondary causes. I went into my bed-room, shut my door, took my Bible, fell on my knees, and begged the Lord to give me a word to lean on that I might put my trust in him; and these words were given to me: "A thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee." I got up from my knees with this confidence that the Lord would keep me and my family. I would not be presumptuous and say I had no fear, through the dreadful visitation, for I had at times a close examination; but still it kept me up. I wish I could carry everything there. It is always better with me when I can leave dying mortals alone, and go as a child to a father for wisdom in all things.

Another answer to prayer comes to my mind. I had been laid up of rheumatic fever so bad that I could walk only with a stick or holding a chair. A friend of mine, being a doctor, attended me, but could do me but little or no good. I got up one morning and came down stairs, my wife being in bed; and being quite alone I laid my case before the great Physician and begged him once more to appear for me, a poor worm, as my complaint was all known to him and not too hard for his almighty arm. I then got up, when a man came in to light his pipe. Seeing me a cripple, he asked me what was the matter. I told him, and he told me what to do. I viewed this man as an answer to prayer. I found ease almost at once. In a day or so I was so well that I could go without a stick; yea, I totally recovered. O that I could go to the Lord at all times, with all my complaints. Alas! I cannot. There is often a cloud and unbelief in my heart; but still there is the cry, "Lord, remove it if be thy blessed will, for thou knowest I am but dust."

I remember one time, living in the country, I used to invite two persons, whom I believed were children of God, to my table every Sabbath. This I did for the Lord's sake, as they were very poor. They were men of great faith. I often wished I was like them. At the same time their conduct often stumbled me. I was very tender.

I was, as Hart says, "longing to lay hold, but fearing to presume." I wanted nothing but what God would own. I was afraid to say anything to them, for fear of touching God's anointed; but one day I told them I was sure there was something wrong, as their conversation did not become the gospel of Christ. After this, we soon parted, and I have ever found:

"It is decreed that most shall walk
These darkest paths alone."

I have blessed the Lord many times for weaning me from the broken arm of flesh. O for a secret religion, and, as the poet says:

"O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame;
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb."

To the present time I like a walk alone, where I can cry and meditate; and I can say many a tear has dropped on the road, both of sorrow and of joy. Yes, the bitter has been made sweet, the medicine has been food.

In 1852, I left with my wife and family with six children for Australia. After many mercies experienced on board, we arrived safe in the land of our adoption, as far as I can remember, with a little more than a pound in my pocket; but a friend that loved God lent me £5 till I got into something in the country. I have seen the Lord's hand towards me, both in providence and grace. A son of dear Mr. D.'s offered to take me in as a partner in the tobacco business. He was rich in this world's goods. I went 1000 miles to see him for his father's sake, but could not join him, though he would have taken me and fetched my family without any expense to me. I went to work on board the ship I sailed out in. In the evening I went to cross the deck and slipped over the hatchway 25 feet, and fell on the large ballast stones on the bottom. I broke three of my ribs and my hand. The doctor thought my skull was broken. I was laid on a board, and could not move hand or foot. After a few days I was taken home, and had a narrow escape of being drowned. The boat was laden to the brink, as it was a dead calm. I was lowered down in a chair. As soon as we got to the jetty, there came on a strong gale. Had it come five minutes before, we must have been capsized, and I could not have helped myself; but he that holds the wind in his fist would not allow the wind to blow till we had landed. If a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, this was no chance work. I was taken home, where I lay for about five weeks, and no hope of my recovery, nor hardly a gleam of hope beyond the grave. One night I thought I was dying. The icy hand of death seemed to be upon me. I expected every moment to pass the swellings of Jordan. My son said, "Father, shall I read to you?" He took an old "Gospel Standard" that I brought with me from England with many others, and read, though he knew it not, a letter I had written many years before. This was to me bread cast upon the water and found after many

days. The scales dropped from my eyes, the prison doors were opened, my soul was delivered, and I soon got well.

Passing over many mercies, I will just speak of one that was to me as the voice of God. I was offered by a friend a shop and business on easy terms, and I believe I might have made a deal of money in a short time, as my friend had made some thousands; and this was pleasing to the flesh and I felt a hankering after it, yet was afraid whether I could keep my conscience clean in it. After I had carried it to the Lord he enabled me to lie passive and to say, "Not mine but thy will be done." After prayer I took the Bible, and opened on these words: "In his estate shall stand up a vile person." I was astonished, and read it again, to see that I had not made a mistake. This settled the matter with me in a moment, and I was humbled to think the Lord should condescend to take notice of and guide a poor worm. I told my friend I could not take it, as the Lord had shown me not to have it. I then watched who did take it, and it was a vile person indeed, a Jew, and he an infidel whose life was awful.

There is nothing so sweet as to see the hand of God on our behalf, yes, even though cross. I would rather see a Father's hand than have all the gold of Victoria given to me.

I will mention one solemn and awful circumstance that took place in the colony. I attend sales to buy furniture. There are amongst the dealers things practised that will not lie straight with conscience. I had oftentimes spoken against them, though I had been trapped and had broken bones through them. I had been ill and brought to the very verge of the grave, so near that the death cold sweat kept passing over me. My family called to see me pass from time into eternity, for aught they or I knew. This is a solemn spot. Nothing but the internal work and teaching of God the Holy Ghost will do here. Here we lose much of our hay, wood, and stubble. Seven weeks I lay here and sometimes for days neither sun, moon, nor stars appeared. But I must not enlarge here. Suffice it to say, the Lord raised me up again. The first sale I went to a dealer wanted to do what my conscience could not consent to; and because I would not, he turned round and made fun of me and my religion and of my tender conscience. Here God, his cause, and my tender conscience were held up to the public scorn. I felt grieved to my very soul, but no enmity, only pity, and could leave my cause with Him. This man was taken ill just afterwards. The very tongue with which he so often blasphemed the God of my every mercy rotted off and came from his mouth. He begged for mercy and would have been glad to have what he often made fun of; but he is gone. I hope he found mercy, and here I leave him. "It is a solemn thing to fall into the hands of the living God." It is a mercy when we can fall into his hands, as a lump of clay, and say, "Lord, plead my cause." This I have found thousands of times.

This is a sketch of what I partly wrote nearly 20 years ago; and as the experience of the children of God has been often blessed to my soul, and rejoiced my heart, I thought I would just send you a

few outlines of some of my bitters and sweets and answers of prayer for 35 years in the wilderness. I have not written this for publication, though I would not confine you; but merely that you might know some of the Lord's mercies to one of the weakest and most helpless and vilest and most unworthy of all his family. I often feel Mary Magdalene, Manasseh, David, and Paul to be my brothers and sister.

"Some souls are fifty pieces deep,
But I five hundred owe;"

and I never can solve the reason why the Lord should pick me up and why I found mercy. It is often a humbling thought when I look to my origin, without father or mother, a poor boy in the poor-house; yea, one of the very scum of the town, that I should be picked up and made the object of his mercy; and here I say, "Wonder, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth, for the Lord has done it." And when I get home, redeeming grace will be my eternal song.

You and I shall soon have to pass the swellings of Jordan, and there I hope we shall bathe in that sea of love where there is neither bottom, bound, nor shore. O for faith to look beyond the bounds of all created things and pierce within the veil to see him, the eternal Son, seated on his Father's throne for you and me.

May God bless you with wisdom, grace, knowledge, and understanding in this dark day of general profession, to draw a line between the living and the dead, the work of God the Holy Ghost on the souls of his children and sparks of the hot-bed kindling. To know his voice from the voice of strangers is worth a thousand worlds. O to feel union, vital union, to Jesus, the living Head, to feel united to the living Vine. To draw daily sap from Jesus the heavenly Root is worth a million worlds, and I would rather have one moment's sweet intercourse with him than thousands of gold and silver. Were it not for a blessed hope, at times, beyond the grave, what poor things we should be when we feel this mud-walled cottage shake. Farewell.

Collingwood, Victoria.

JAMES DAVIS.

God never intended temporal things for his people's portion; therefore from them they must not expect their relief in times of trouble. He will have us read his love to us by things within us, not by things without us. He hath other ways of expressing his love to his people than by the smiles of his providence upon them. How would earthly things be overhauled and idolized if, besides their convenience to our bodies, they should be the marks and evidences of God's love to our souls! A Christian is to value himself as the merchant or the husbandman doth. The merchant values himself by his bills and goods abroad, not by the ready cash that lies by him; and the husbandman by his deeds and leases, and so many acres of corn he hath in the ground, and knows he hath a good estate, though sometimes he be not able to command twenty shillings. Christian, thy estate also lies in good promises and new covenant securities, whether thou hast more or less of earthly comforts in thy hands.—*Flavel*.

THE ADVANCE OF POPERY.

III.

WE must not always judge of events by their present aspect, as such judgment is usually hasty, and often false. God's plans are very deep, and, as such, usually hidden out of sight. When the clouds look darkest, they are often most quickly dispelled. When affairs appear going backward, it is frequently to urge them more rapidly and effectively forward. It may be so in the case now before us. Were we, for instance, to judge of the advance of Popery from recent events, we should say that since our last Article appeared it has received the most crushing blow which it has for many years experienced; and that so far from advancing, it has scarcely ever received so decisive a check, or apparently been driven farther back. But this may be true as regards the Continent, and yet not true as regards its progress here, or eventually elsewhere. A little explanation, therefore, of the effect and tendency of recent events may not be out of place; and if our remarks wear, as some may think, too much of a political character, our apology must be that such a view of them is hardly separable from a full and clear comprehension of our subject. We are, of course, alluding now to the terrible defeat of the Austrian army at Königgrätz, in Bohemia, by the Prussians, and its immediate results. Austria has for centuries been the right arm of Popery, and a cruel persecutor both of liberty and Protestantism. Bohemia, the very spot where she lately received so signal a defeat, was once almost wholly Protestant. It was the native country and chief seat of the labours of John Huss, Luther's forerunner by a hundred years, and who was burnt by the Council of Constance for heresy, *i. e.*, opposing Popery, A. D. 1415. Prepared for them by the preaching and writings of John Huss, and having by force of arms previously established their religious liberty, the Bohemians readily embraced the doctrines of Luther, and Bohemia became almost wholly a Protestant people. But Austria, after a long series of wars, succeeded in stamping out doctrines hateful to her, as much because pregnant germs of liberty in the State as of the right of private judgment in religion. It was Austria which made the Concordat with Rome, whereby she bound herself hand and foot to the Papal chair, disallowed what are called mixed marriages, that is, the marriages of Protestant and Catholic, and surrendered the whole education of her millions into the hands of the Romish priesthood. Who, then, that values civil and religious liberty shall weep at Austria's reverses, and not rather rejoice that when Protestantism and Popery met face to face at Königgrätz, victory fell to the former, and not to the latter? All must mourn that such torrents of blood were shed; all must loathe the demon of war; but when battles are fought in which we are mere lookers-on, we may rejoice in the issue, though we may grieve at the means. The immediate effect of this signal defeat was to give Venetia* to

* Venetia is a considerable territory, which Italy has long coveted, of which Venice is the metropolis.

Italy. And what must follow in due time? The downfall of the temporal power of the Pope, and the acquisition of Rome to Italy. In gaining Venetia, Italy gains, not only Venice, but what is called "the quadrilateral," that is, four impregnable fortresses, in the form of a quadrangle, which defied even the French emperor, after the battle of Solferino. Italy, therefore, has not only gained deliverance from Austria, which could always attack her through Venetia, but will soon be able to defy France itself. What, then, is to hinder Rome falling to Italy? Austria cannot hinder it; the Emperor of the French would hardly venture to send an army to prevent it; and Italy is determined to have it.

Our readers will excuse these political remarks. We should not have introduced them, but for several reasons: 1. They are in strict connection with our subject; 2. They seem wonderfully accomplishing the purposes of God; 3. They may serve to throw light upon recent events to some of our readers, who may not have fully considered the subject.

But assume the downfall of Papal Rome, and that before 1870, the latest date fixed by Mr. Huntington, the temporal power of the Pope comes to nought. Will that lessen or weaken his spiritual power? No, not a whit; nay, will rather, according to our view, strengthen it. There is the mistake which so many have made and are making. They confound two things wholly distinct—the Pope as a temporal prince, and the Pope as an ecclesiastical head. As the former, the Pope is little better than any other petty prince of Italy or Germany. Indeed, he differs from them only because his temporal power and dignity borrow some strength and lustre from his spiritual. In fact, his temporal power is his weakness, not his strength, and has been so in all ages. Nothing has so weakened, nothing so injured the popes of Rome as their civil dominion, and for this simple reason, that it has been the spring and focus of all those ambitious and ungodly transactions, wherein they have preferred private interests and the advance of their families to the general interests of the church of which they were the head. To enrich their families, to marry their nephews and nieces, and often their sons and daughters, for many of them had children by their concubines, (as Alexander VI., commonly called Borgia,) and to extend their dominions, the popes in the middle ages, by committing the greatest crimes, brought scandal upon the church as well as upon themselves. To feed the expenses of their court and civil power they invented or availed themselves of indulgences, jubilees, sales of bishoprics, and every other means whereby money could be obtained. Thus their temporal power was their weakness, not their strength. Assume, then, that Popery ceases to be a temporal power, assume that the present Pope is the last civil prince, and that the three-crowned tiara falls from his head, would that be the downfall of Popery? No, rather the resetting of it on a firmer and stronger base. If you cannot see this point, take a nearer view of it. You live in a parish where Puseyism is making rapid advances. The church services are all but Roman Catholic, and the people not only love to have it so,

but are ready for, and desirous of, a fuller development. Now do you think that if Garibaldi were to seize Rome and drive out the Pope, there would be any diminution of zeal in the Puseyistic minister or downfall of the present practices? Would there be one monk, one nun, one priest the less in this country? Would Popery be swept away as with a besom into the German Ocean? No. On the contrary, there would be such a spirit of sympathy with the poor, dear, cruelly-treated Pope; there would be such a kindling of zeal in the breast of every devout Catholic, and many, too, who are indifferent as devotees but not as partisans, that an additional impetus would be given to the whole body. Besides which, the Pope would then stand forth as the spiritual head of millions of Catholics untrammelled with temporal difficulties. As they are immensely rich, his very poverty would unlock their coffers; as driven from his throne, his sufferings would form a constant theme of appeal to his devoted children. He could safely hurl his anathemas and excommunications from the height of his ecclesiastical dominion, and would gain a thousand times over in devotedness from his religious what he may have lost from his civil subjects.

It is, therefore, a thorough misconception of the nature of Popery to think that recent events threaten its downfall as an ecclesiastical system. They do indeed sorely threaten the court of Rome, but not the church of Rome. There are but two things which threaten the latter, and under one of which she will one day surely fall. The one is infidelity, and the other is the word of God. Infidelity in France in the first revolution so cut her up for a time, root and branch, that nearly every church through the land was closed, and it was death to a priest to appear in the streets of Paris. And though now nominally restored to its original position as the dominant religion, the Romish church in that country, having lost at the Revolution all its tithes and landed property, and being salaried, and that very poorly, by the State, has little hold of any class in society except the rude, ignorant peasantry, and a number of those female devotees who in every land, be the religion what it may, cling to the priesthood with all the mingled weakness and fidelity of their sex. The educated classes, and the men generally, if not avowed infidels in sentiment, are practical infidels in life, despise the system altogether, and hate the priests, not only as the main pillars of the building, but as abusing the confessional, if not for vicious, at least often for selfish or political purposes. The Emperor, as owing his throne and its very present maintenance to the peasantry—the millions spread through the rural districts, for France is eminently an agricultural country, dares not openly oppose the priests, who, through their bishops, beard him to the face, but it is well known that in heart he hates and despises them. Germany is as full of infidelity as France, and of a deeper, subtler, and therefore more dangerous character. The infidelity of France is chiefly that of Voltaire—a cold, sarcastic, scornful rejection of revelation, and its chief weapons are jests, gibes, and witticisms. This we may call the infidelity of the heart. But the infidelity of Germany, at least

of the German school, is that of learning and argument; and its weapons are every objection which the keenest investigation of ancient history and modern science can put into its hand. This we may call the infidelity of the head. English infidelity, as represented by Colenso and the authors of "Essays and Reviews," is almost wholly drawn from German sources; and it is from this polluted spring that not only the two Universities, but the dissenting academies, are fast drinking the poisonous draughts which will one day more fully manifest themselves by their effects. Our own conviction is, that if Rome fall, it will be by the hand of infidelity; or rather, as we shall by-and-by show, to save herself from falling, will fall into its embrace.

Her other antagonist is the word of God—and that not in the letter, but in its power. This was the grand weapon used against her in days of old, and from it, at least for a time, she received a deadly wound. It was Luther's sole weapon, and its first stroke was when, A.D. 1517, he nailed with his own hands to the door of the principal church at Wittenburg his celebrated *theses*, or propositions, against the doctrine of papal indulgences promulgated by Tetzel. It was the weapon of John Knox in Scotland, and of our reformers in England; and how effectual it was we all know who have felt the power of God's word upon our hearts. But we have little hope that God will use this weapon again. When once his word has been rejected, he rarely sends it to the same people a second time. His word puts men upon their trial. If received, every blessing follows; if rejected, they are given up to the curse. It was so with the Jews of old. They rejected the word, as preached first by our Lord and then by his apostles. God bore with them for a time, according to his usual way, enduring with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; but when they obstinately persevered in their rejection of the truth, they were left to perish in their sins, and the gospel was preached to, and received by, the Gentiles. We cannot, therefore, expect to see the word of God run and be glorified again, as in the days of the Reformation. Italy, where hitherto the bible has been a prohibited book, may be flooded with bibles, but unless the mighty power of God attend it, the bible may be in every house, and be as dead a book in it as the first-born in Egypt on the night of the passover.

But infidelity is another kind of foe; and one must be blind to the signs of the times, not to see what progress it is making in this country. In former times, a man like Bishop Colenso must have left the Church of England, or been turned out of it. But the hand of power, which can silence at once a poor Calvinistic curate, and hunt him out of every diocese, is paralysed when it has to touch lawn sleeves. In the Church of England there are at present but two strong parties,—one strong from its numbers, the Puseyistic party, and the other from its abilities, what is called "the Broad Church," which is infidel in its tendencies. Before these two parties, the bishops are thoroughly powerless, and seem unable or unwilling to lift up voice or hand against the most pronounced Ritual

ceremonies, or the most outspoken Rationalistic doctrines. These two parties, the Ritualists and the Rationalists, or, to speak more plainly, the Puseyites and the Broad Church, are antagonistic, and represent in miniature the grand struggle going on between Popery and infidelity,—the Puseyites being semi, if not full Papists, and the Rationalists semi, if not thorough infidels. We owe an apology for these details, but many of our readers have not the means of obtaining clear views upon these points, which yet are necessary for the full understanding of our subject.

Now it has long been the conviction of our mind that if Popery fall, and upon that point all our best writers on the subject are agreed, whatever height it may rise to previously, it will either fall by the hand of infidelity, or will ally itself with it, and sink, as it were, into its embrace. None can know what Popery really is without seeing its vast strength. Power, as we have shown in a former No., is and always was its sole aim. Now we may depend upon it that it will not resign this power without a desperate struggle, and that sooner than wholly resign all, it would be willing to share it. Between it and truth there can never be any union. Rome hates the gospel with deadly hatred. The blood of the martyrs is on her head, and cries out against her for vengeance. Destruction, not conversion, is her doom. Truth on her side is equally uncompromising. She can no more ally herself with Rome, than Rome with her. But not so with infidelity. All religions being the same to the infidel—all equally false, he can afford to be liberal to all. A Roman Catholic is no more and no less to him than a Protestant. As long as each is quiet, does not force religion on him, does not persecute, he is content. He inwardly smiles at all, and outwardly on all. As far as he cares, the Puseyite priest may, in "the dim religious light" of St. Barnabas, put on his new vestments, bow before the altar, and intone the service to his heart's content. He would no more raise a finger to stop him than he would to prevent the Baptist preacher addressing his humble congregation in the neighbouring chapel.

We thus see that both foes to Romanism are mute; the word of God, not from any defect in itself, but from the want of power attending it; and infidelity, not from any real diminution of its virulence, but from its general indifference.

Now putting all these things together, and drawing our arguments to a head, what is there to check or prevent the advance of Popery in this country? Recent events, as we have shown, though apparently adverse abroad, yet are no hindrances to its advance here. Rome may fall as a civil power, and this may somewhat affect her position in Italy; but here she has no civil power, and only rules by her ecclesiastical authority. The allegiance given to the Pope in this country is wholly founded upon his claim to be the vicar of Christ and head of his visible church on earth. This, therefore, remains independent of, untouched by his temporal power as a petty prince in Italy; and, as we have already shown, may gather fresh strength from his very reverses.

Consider, next, what little opposition would be offered to its advance by the Church of England, which has always been viewed as the chief bulwark against Papal Rome. We remember the time when there was a strong and powerful party in the Church of England, represented by such men as Lord Eldon, who were opposed, tooth and nail, to Popery. The evangelicals also, who, at that time, were an influential, if not large, body were equally opposed to its pretensions.* But both these parties are now defunct or powerless. Treason has crept into the camp and opened the gates to Popery. But for Puseyism, Popery would never have invaded or entered into the Church of England. But these traitors, the Puseyites, are Papists in heart, and are every day advancing more and more on the high road to Popery. We now see it as in the bud, but the bud is expanding every day, and will soon become the full blown rose. In this country there is a large party, who, if not absolutely favourable to Popery, are favourable to the accompaniments of Popery. The Church of England service is a very bald, cold service, when it has nothing but its naked simplicity to recommend it; and, though they hardly dare confess it, this has made it dreadfully wearisome to many of its firm adherents. They venerate, almost adore, the Prayer book, but yawn a good deal at it, and find a great relief when it is closed. Now, the Puseyites have met this feeling of weariness by dressing the cold, bald service out with some of the warmer accompaniments of Romanism. They have introduced the practice of chanting the Psalms and Responses; and the sweet voices of the little choristers please the ear, and give animation to the service. Then there is an altar instead of the old plain table, with lights, flowers, a crucifix, if they dare go so far, and a deal of bowing and kneeling before it. The chancel is filled with the sweet smell of incense, and the priests, as they call themselves, dress in their albs, chasubles, surplices, and a host of coloured vestments borrowed from the Romish Church, as strange and novel to the eye, as their names to the ear. With all this, there is what is called the sacrament of the altar, where they believe Christ's actual body and soul—the whole of his humanity, is present in the bread after consecration. We have not space to enlarge on all the other accessories, such as beautiful architecture, painted windows, altar cloths worked by the hands of fair and titled dames, with the choicest productions of the hot house, to gratify the eye. Now, when a congregation has got a taste for these excitements of the senses, when, under the cover of religious veneration, ear and eye and smell are thus exquisitely regaled, and the whole mind is animated as with new warmth under their united influence,

* It was the union of these two parties which turned out Sir Robert Peel from representing the University of Oxford in 1829, at the time of Roman Catholic Emancipation. The writer of these lines remembers with satisfaction that he voted against Sir R. Peel at that memorable election, and sacrificed his political principles, which were then, as now, liberal, to his religious convictions. Catholic emancipation was, perhaps, inevitable from political necessities; but it was the first opening of a door, through which a flood of evils has come in, of which we have by no means seen the end yet.

it naturally thirsts for deeper draughts of this intoxicating cup. The whole blame of these innovations is usually cast on the Puseyite clergyman. It may, perhaps, justly be so as to the introduction of them; but the blame of their continuance and advance must be shared in by the congregation. Unless they were strongly backed and supported by their congregations, the Puseyistic ministers would not be so bold and daring as they now are. But they have slowly and gradually imbued the people, not so much at present with the doctrines as with the externals of Romanism. The doctrines will soon follow in all their fulness. The people see the seeming awe and external veneration paid by their ministers to the altar and the sacrament. This acts by sympathy on them. They instinctively drink into the same feelings. As the spectators of a tragedy drink into the spirit of the scene from seeing the countenances and gestures, and hearing the words of the actors, so the attendants at one of these Puseyistic churches are moved by the acts and gestures of their priests, and imbibe from them similar feelings of veneration, without any clear definite views about the doctrine of transubstantiation, though they have strong leanings in that direction. When, therefore, a fuller development comes, it will not take them by surprise, but rather fill up a want which is felt by them rather than expressed, but is continually gathering strength from the food now supplied to it. As the ministers, then, gradually advance from one step to another, the congregation will move with them, until Popery will be welcomed by them as the full completion of their wishes and desires. The bishops, if not favourable to it, will be powerless to oppose it. Most of them are already prepared to receive it, and if it were to come to this, "You must either embrace Popery or give up your bishopric," we are inclined to think there would be found amongst them few Ridleys or Latimers who would rather choose death at the stake than to profess their belief in transubstantiation. Thus the great bulwark against Popery is already undermined and gradually falling, and the Church of England will be the door through which, if it eventually prevail, it will climb to the height of its power.

In our next article we purpose to examine other circumstances, which are almost equally favouring the advance of Popery in this country, and some of which, though we cannot conscientiously suppress them, will demand on our part careful consideration and cautious handling, lest we get too much on political ground.

NOAH was warned. This warning he believed, and saw the destruction coming on. It was attended with fear, which moved him to prepare an ark. Without faith and fears we never begin in truth to look out for a way of escape from the wrath to come. The ark, as a place of safety or security, may be a type of Christ, though in other respects a type of the church. And faith, which is God's gift, and fear, of his own implanting, both act and move by God's word; and will never suffer the soul that is possessed of them to be at rest, till it find security from wrath and ruin in Christ Jesus.—*Beeman.*

MEDITATIONS ON VARIOUS IMPORTANT POINTS OF OUR MOST HOLY FAITH.

I.

THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL.

(Continued from page 256.)

WE are never so safe as when we are on strict Scripture ground; indeed, off that ground we are never safe at all. It is for this reason that in our Meditations on the Ministry of the Gospel we have adhered so closely to the word of truth, and preferred bringing forward select passages in which the Holy Ghost has clearly unfolded its true nature and character, and opening, to the best of our ability, their spiritual meaning, to dealing with the subject in a wider and looser way by general observations of our own. But the letter of Scripture is one thing, and the interpretation of it is another. We might quote right passages, and yet give them a wrong interpretation. We believe, however, that we have not so erred. At least, we can declare with all holy boldness the inmost conviction of our conscience that, with the exception of such infirmities and defects of knowledge or expression as all are subject to, we have interpreted the word of the Spirit according to the mind of the Spirit. This may seem to some a bold assertion; but we will make a still bolder one in the expression of our conviction that whoever undertakes to instruct the church of God must have the fullest certainty in his own mind that what he brings forward is in harmony with the mind of the Spirit, or he is utterly unfit either to stand up in a pulpit or to handle a pen in the cause of God and truth.

Carrying out, then, this plan, we are now engaged in opening the mind of the Spirit as expressed by the apostle, Eph. iv. 11-16, and have advanced in our explanation as far as the end of verse 12: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." In the verses which immediately follow, and which we shall presently quote, the fruits and effects of the ministry are unfolded with equal clearness and beauty, as we hope to show by our exposition of them: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." (Eph. iv. 13-16.)

Several points here are worthy of our closest attention, and especially two as fruits of the ministry: 1. What peculiar *evils* we are

instrumentally to be preserved from *by* it; 2. What eminent *advantages* we are to reap *from* it.

We will consider these two points separately.

i. Observe then, first, what we may call the *negative* side, the peculiar *evils* from which the gospel is intended to preserve or deliver us.

The ministry of the gospel is intended to be our main safeguard against error: "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." (Ver. 14.)

Many, if not most, in a profession of religion are children all their days—not children in the best sense of the word, but children in the worst. In the Scripture we find the figure of a child used in two different senses, each being drawn from its natural character. In a child, as a child, there are two main, leading, salient features—what we may call its good side, and its bad side. Its docility, simplicity, sincerity, humility, artlessness, and what is usually termed its innocence, form its good side. This part of its character our Lord noticed when "he called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of the disciples, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. xviii. 3, 4.) But the child is also ignorant, unstable, undecided, pettish, soon moved to passion or to tears, caught by baubles and gewgaws, credulous, open to deception, fickle, and changeable. This forms its bad, or at least its weak side. The apostle has beautifully hit off the difference between these two senses of the word in one verse: "Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men." (1 Cor. xiv. 20.) To be a child in understanding is to be weak, ignorant, vacillating, undecided, ever halting between two opinions, deficient in every manly grace and gift; ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. To be a child in spirit is to be simple, sincere, teachable, peaceable, affectionate, open, free from craft, hypocrisy, and guile. To be the first is to be the least, to be the last is to be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

In grace as in nature, there is a period when we are children; and such a state has its beauty in one as well as in the other. A born man would be a monster or a prodigy, as Hercules is fabled to have strangled two serpents in his cradle sent by the goddess Juno to kill him, or as King Richard III. is said to have come into the world not only with a hump on his back, but with teeth in his head. Jerusalem, the mother of us all, bears no such prodigies as infant giants, able when yet in arms to overcome the wicked one, or well toothed babes who cry out for strong meat instead of milk. The Scripture most plainly lays it down that the church of God is made up of babes, children, young men, and fathers; and to hear a child

talk like a father is almost worse than to hear a father talk like a child.*

In this sense we are to be "no more children." To have been a child once is enough. We are to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." We are to grow up, as we shall by-and-by show, "unto him in all things, who is the Head, even Christ." There is a coming unto "a perfect," or adult man, "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Wherever there is life there is growth, and the more healthy the life, the more vigorous, the more marked is the growth. A want of growth is, therefore, a sure mark of sickness, or at least of a weak, unhealthy constitution. The apostle, therefore, sharply reproves the Hebrew disciples as being always children: "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe." (Heb. v. 12, 13.) We see sometimes children that never seem to grow, or able to run alone, or learn to talk. What a grief is this to their parents, who fear that they may turn out idiots. Should it not be a matter of equal grief to ministers to see their spiritual children showing, year after year, little else but the weakness, ignorance, and instability of childhood, and so little of the strength and firmness of youth or manhood? But there is something even worse than want of growth. There is an old Latin proverb, "*Non progredi est regredi*," that is, "Not to go forward is to go backward." In the divine life there is no standing still. Not to go on is to go back; not to grow is to decay; not to fight is to flee; not to resist is to yield.

But there are worse consequences of continual childhood even than this. There is a "being tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." This is just the state of many in our churches. In the controversy about the true, proper, and eternal Sonship of our gracious Lord, how many, not merely members of the congregation, but members of the church in various places of professed truth, were ever tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine. Just as the wind blew, they were driven. If they read a book or an article in its favour, then they thought *that* right; if the next day they met with a book or article against it, then they thought *that* right. Like the chameleon, they changed their colour according to their book or their company—not so much from wickedness as from weakness, not so much from hypocrisy as from indecision, not so much from craft as from cowardice, not so much from wilfulness in error as from instability in truth.

* A friend of ours once told us of a young man who used to pray at the prayer meeting in such a way that a stranger behind the door, who did not see him, would have thought it was the experience and language of a deeply taught, well established father in Israel. Our friend, who possessed some discernment, augured badly of him from the circumstance; and these suspicions were too well founded, for we believe that he turned out very ill.

But what was the consequence of all this childish weakness, ignorance, and instability? That they laid themselves open to, and became a prey of, "the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lay in wait to deceive." The real heretics, the erroneous men, saw at a glance with whom they could, and with whom they could not succeed. It was these unstable ones whom they juggled by their sleight of hand, whom they cheated with their loaded dice.* It was these dwarfed, sickly, rickety children that they laid their crafty plans to deceive† and entangle in error. These are their game, whom they find out as instinctively as the London sharpers smell out a country bumpkin, with whom they are so willing to share a part of the large fortune which has just been left him by a dead uncle. Now to deliver the family of God from these sharpers is an important part of the gospel ministry. As the ministry is "for the perfecting of the saints," it is to bring them out of this childish state of ignorance and instability, through which, as carried about with every wind of doctrine, they fall a prey to the arts of these designing men. Did you ever read any of their books or see any of their pieces? With what craft they write! How they commence with a show of truth as if they believed just the same doctrines as the church of God has always held; but by little and little they bring forth their error, yet still so wrapped up in Scripture language that it almost requires an eagle's eye to see into their real meaning. We see the necessity, therefore, that the man of God should be well armed at all points against such errors and such men; should be thoroughly instructed himself into a clear experimental knowledge of the truth; should be furnished with a sufficient gift of utterance to unfold and enforce it clearly, and courage to defend it firmly, boldly, and faithfully.

A main part of the ministry is instruction. The character of the babe is that he is "unskilful in the word of righteousness." He, therefore, needs instruction—instruction from the word of truth, called "the word of righteousness," as unfolding and manifesting "the righteousness of God," that is, not God's intrinsic and eternal righteousness as a just and holy Jehovah, but his wondrous plan of saving sinners by the incarnation and mediation of his dear Son, so that "he might be just and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." (Rom. iii. 21–26.) Now if these weak and vacillating members had been but well instructed in "the word of righteousness;" if they had been favoured with clear views of the Trinity, and seen how intimately and closely it was connected with the divine Sonship of Jesus; if they had been well grounded and established in an experimental knowledge of the Son of God by some gracious discovery of his glorious Person to their soul, would they have been

* The word translated "sleight" is literally "dicing," that is, cheating with loaded dice.

† Paul himself never put so much strong meaning into a few words as those so expressively rendered in our English version "cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;" but they might be thus more fully and literally translated: "With unprincipled craftiness, laying down a deliberate plan of deception."

tossed to and fro and carried about with these winds of erroneous doctrine?

We are not advocates for dry doctrine—far from it; but we are advocates, and warm ones too, for laying before the people the grand verities, the vital truths of our most holy faith, with every doctrine according to godliness, which we have ourselves tasted, felt, and handled as the food of our soul. We never loved so much, never more highly valued, never saw more beauty in, never felt the sweetness more of the grand doctrines of grace which we have professed so many years; and were never more fully, if so much, persuaded of the importance and indeed necessity that they should be the main staple of the ministry as setting forth the person and work of the Son of God. To be well established in the truth is a great blessing both for minister and people. It gives a firmness to the ministry and a satisfaction to the church and congregation. They feel that they can trust their man. He has fully proved, and therefore well knows his ground. He has felt the truth and power of what he preaches in his own soul. He is resting all the weight of his own personal salvation on the grand and glorious truths of the everlasting gospel, as all centering in the person of Christ. He has his sharp exercises, and may have his doubts and fears; but these touch not the foundation, do not affect the truths themselves, but only how far he may be deceived as to his personal interest in them. But his very exercises make him hold truth with a firmer hand. Lies, he well knows, cannot save him; errors, he is fully confident, cannot sanctify him. All his hope is in the truth; all his dependence is on Christ and his finished work. The enemies of the Son of God, of salvation by grace, of a living experience of the power of truth, are therefore *his* enemies, because they would dig up the foundations of the everlasting gospel, destroy his faith, and root out his very hope. He contends, therefore, for the truth in its purity and its power, not only from a sense of its sweetness, but from a sense of its necessity. It is with him not a mere Sunday sermon, the subject of a text neatly spun out into a discourse, but the one grand matter, the one thing needful, by which he must live and die. He therefore digs more and more deeply into its hid treasures, that his own soul and the souls of his hearers may be enriched thereby; and he guards it with more holy zeal and indignant warmth against the thieves and robbers who would plunder himself and them of their very hope of salvation.

ii. But we now come to the *positive* side—the *advantages* which we are to reap from the ministry of the gospel. These are contained in verse 13, of which verses 15 and 16 are but a fuller explanation: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." (Eph. iv. 13.)

We shall have to open and work out several points of truth here.

1. The leading idea is that of "coming unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." The means of its attainment are "unity of faith and a knowledge of the Son of God."

We have already shown that growth is the grand mark of life. But this growth has both its object and its term. It is not a rapid, loose, shooting up, like that of a tall, lank, over-grown boy, or of a tree which spindles with its one shoot on high, without thickening its stem or throwing out its side branches. The *object* or intention of the growth is "to grow up in all things into Christ;" the *term* or end of the growth is that of "a perfect" or adult man, or, as more fully expressed, "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Strictly speaking, as is evident from verse 16, the growth intended by the apostle is that of the whole church, as the mystical body of Christ; but the expression, "Till we all come," allows us to apply it to individuals. As this last is the simpler meaning, we shall consider it first.

Christ is the Head of every member individually, as he is the Head of the whole body collectively. Growth of the body, from babyhood to manhood, is the growth of individual members in the body. If, then, I am a member of the mystical body of Christ Jesus, I shall grow. My growth may be so slow and gradual as to be scarcely perceptible; but it will be growth still. If I have union with Christ, I shall be supplied, at least in some measure, out of his fulness. He is my life, and he has promised, because he lives, I shall live also; and if I live by him, I shall live upon and unto him. Paul could say, "The life which I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God;" and tells us, "And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." (2 Cor. v. 15.)

But this life and this growth are maintained by means, and the chief amongst them is the ministry of the gospel. By a sound gospel ministry our souls are fed. Christ is set before us in all the glories of his divine Person, in his Deity and Sonship, and in all the graces of his suffering humanity. His covenant characters and gracious relationships, his blood and righteousness, his death and resurrection, his ascension and glorification at the right hand of the Father, his present mediation and intercession, his sympathy as a once suffering but now exalted high Priest, and his ability to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him, are brought before us as the food of our faith; and as we taste that he is gracious, and feed upon him as the bread of life, there is a growth into him. We grow out of self, and it is to be hoped, in some measure, out of the love of the world and of sin; and we love and admire him all the more that we taste of his grace and see of his glory. The term or end of this growth is "perfection"—that is, not moral, legal, or fleshly perfection, but that adult state, that ripeness of judgment, that maturity of Christian stature, that establishment in the truth which distinguishes the grown-up man from the weak, ignorant, vacillating child. Paul's "perfect man" means an adult, a grown-up man, not perfect as free from sin, defect, or infirmity, but as arrived at fulness of strength and stature. The word is therefore well translated, "of full age," (Heb. v. 14,) it being precisely the same word as is rendered "perfect" in the passage now before us.

But this maturity, which it is the end of the ministry to accomplish, mainly depends on two things, which mark and test the soundness of the ministry and of the food furnished by it.

1. First it is "in the unity of the faith." There is, there can be but "one faith," as there is but "one God and one Lord." This faith is "the faith of God's elect," as opposed to the faith which is common to all men; "the gift of God," as opposed to the work of man; a fruit of the Spirit, as opposed to a fruit of the flesh. There is a unity or oneness of this faith in all the living members of the mystical body of Christ, so that, with all their seeming differences, their faith is really one and the same, and they the sole possessors of it. The object of their faith is one and the same—the Son of God; the ground of their faith is one and the same—the word of his grace; the author and finisher of their faith is one and the same—the Lord Jesus Christ; and the end of their faith is one and the same—the salvation of their soul. This faith has to grow, (2 Thess. i. 3,) and it grows as fed by the word of truth. Here then we see the benefit and blessing of the gospel ministry. It is intended to feed the faith of the Church by holding forth to it the word of life. (Phil. ii. 16.) This therefore demands not only a truthful but a living ministry—not only soundness in the faith itself, not only life in the minister's own soul, two indispensable requisites, but life in the word which drops from his lips. The true servant of God is at a point in all that he advances. He can say therefore with Paul, "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." (2 Cor. iv. 13.) This faith in his heart meets and unites with the faith in the heart of his gracious hearers. They are sure that he believes what he preaches, because his "speech and his preaching is in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." And what is the effect? That both his faith and their faith stand not in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. (1 Cor. ii. 4, 5.) This is the unity or oneness of faith which, as working by love, knits and unites the heart of the people to the minister and of the minister to the people. They thus grow together, for as his faith becomes strengthened and enlarged, fresh fields of green pasturage are opened up to him, and into these he leads his willing flock. But a wretched time-server, who has crept into the ministry to eat a piece of bread; or a puffed-up novice, who has a little smattering of doctrine in his head and a set of wheels to his tongue; or a crafty hypocrite, who is watching every turn of the wind nicely to shift his sails; or an erroneous man, who hides his error under the pulpit cushion till he can safely bring it forth; or a vacillating character, who, either from ignorance of the power of truth, or from false charity, or from a soft, pliant disposition, holds with all sides and is faithful to none—how can any such men as these feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood? If I have a living faith in the Son of God, what union can there be between my faith and the faith of such men? It is not merely oneness of doctrine but oneness of faith, and that too neither dead nor droop-

ing, but living, acting, and growing in minister and people which binds them together.

2. But with that there is "the knowledge of the Son of God." If you will read the passage carefully, you will perceive the little word "of" before "the knowledge of the Son of God." This little word "of" refers to the unity just mentioned. Thus there is not only the unity or oneness of faith, but the unity or oneness of the knowledge of the Son of God.

Our readers will bear in mind that the point now before us is the growth of the whole body generally, and of each individual member particularly, through the instrumentality of the ministry of the word. There is a oneness, therefore, of this knowledge both in the minister and in the people. He knows the Son of God for himself. He has had that view, discovery, manifestation, or revelation of the Son of God, whereby he spiritually knows him as the Son of God. He can therefore preach him, and testify of him to the people. They, we of course mean the spiritual part of them, also know, or at least are panting to know the same ever-blessed Son of the Father in truth and love. Here they meet, not only in the unity of faith, but in the unity of knowledge—a sweet, experimental knowledge of the Son of God in his person and work, beauty and blessedness, grace and glory. Directly that Paul's mouth was opened he "preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God." (Acts ix. 20.) And how came he to know that he is the Son of God? Because God was pleased "to reveal his Son in him, that he might preach him among the heathen." (Gal. i. 10.) As, then, the heaven-taught minister sets forth the Person and work of the Son of God, from a gracious, experimental knowledge of him, the blessed Spirit takes of the things of Christ and shows them to the people through the ministry of the word. They receive Christ under the word of the truth of the gospel, which testifies of him, for it bringeth forth fruit in them; (Col. i. 5, 6; ii. 6;) and they thus receive the love of the truth, and are saved thereby. (2 Thess ii. 10.) Now minister and hearer are as one—knit together in a oneness of knowledge, as well as a unity or oneness of faith.

But this knowledge, both in him and them, is, for the most part, but weak, scanty, and imperfect. It is true, real, gracious, experimental, but necessarily imperfect, and will be so to the end of our life, for "now we see through a glass darkly." It therefore admits of growth. Even blessed Paul, who could say, "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ," (Phil. iii. 8,) was obliged to add, "that I may know him," as if he did not yet know him. So great and glorious was his Person, so complete his finished work, so broad, and long, and deep, and high was his love, so sympathising his heart, so strong his hand, so sweet his mouth, so superabounding his grace, that all that he knew of him was but as a drop to the boundless ocean. There is, then, a growth in this knowledge, both in minister and people. As he advances in

this knowledge, they advance with him. Every fresh trial, temptation, and affliction which befalls him leads him into a deeper and further knowledge of the Son of God. As this is brought forth before the people, it feeds their knowledge, and by it their faith, for

“ Faith is by knowledge fed ;”

and as the same Spirit teaches both minister and people, for as there is “ one body,” so there is “ one Spirit,” they move on together in this blessed path of an experimental knowledge of the Son of God.

This is God’s plan, as laid down in the word of his grace; this the fruit of the ministry of the gospel, as traced by the hand of the Holy Ghost. We have not yet done with our subject, as we have still to open verses 15 and 16; but, for the present, let this suffice.

And now what are those voices which we hear in the distance? “ You are cutting us off. You are setting up a fixed, arbitrary standard for the ministry, and if we cannot reach your standard you are at once off with our heads; or if you spare us as Christians, you cut us off as ministers.” Not so, dear friends and brethren in the ministry—to you we speak who have any faith in, any knowledge of the Son of God, and testify to the people of that faith and of that knowledge as far as you possess it. It is not the strength of your faith, nor the depth of your knowledge, nor your gifts and ability in testifying of it that is the question. It is the *reality* of it. What we write, we write from the word of truth and our own experience as a Christian and as a minister. If we set up a high standard, we must cut ourselves off; but believing that we have a living faith, and a gracious knowledge of the Son of God, and this faith and this knowledge forming, as the Lord enables, the basis of our own ministry by tongue and pen, can we admit anything else, whomever it may touch? Would you have us allow that an unbeliever in, or a denier of the Son of God is a true servant of Christ? Shall we set up unbelief in the place of faith, and ignorance or denial of the Son of God instead of a knowledge of him? “ O dear, no,” you say; “ we mean no such thing. God forbid that any one who desires to fear his name and preach his word faithfully should set forth any other way of salvation than faith in the Son of God. But, but”—well, what “ but ?” “ Why, we do not like, and, indeed, we do not at all approve of your setting up a certain standard of faith and knowledge, and cutting off all ministers who do not exactly come up to your standard.” But where have we done this, here or elsewhere? We have shown you, from the word of God, what the ministry of the gospel is, or should be. We have moved carefully and cautiously, step by step, with the express language of the Holy Ghost in the word of truth; and, we may add, with our own experience of the truth of God. If we preach faith, it is because we have some testimony that we possess it; if we preach the knowledge of the Son of God, it is because we have seen and known him in the light of his own gracious revelation. Our writings and sermons, such as they are, have been for years before the church of God. Let them be our judge, whether we have ever set up any other way of sal-

vation than a living faith in, a living knowledge of the Son of God. But we do not set up a fixed standard of this faith and this knowledge, still less a fixed standard of grace and gifts for the ministry of the gospel. If we cut off any, it is the hypocrites in Zion, the false preachers, the erroneous men, the deniers of the Son of God. But we never have touched (God forbid we should ever touch) the weakest of his saints, or the least of his servants. Would to God there were more ministers of the everlasting gospel. It would truly rejoice our heart to see men raised up, humble, simple, sincere, sound in faith, blessed with an experimental knowledge of the Son of God, and furnished with sufficient gifts of utterance as well as inward life and power to feed the church of God. We much need them. The Lord is taking home, or laying aside by sickness or infirmity very many of his servants. And where shall we look to find their successors? It seems to us, at present, a gloomy prospect. We have plenty of preachers, whose worst feature is that, puffed up by a vain idea of their own gifts and abilities, and fawned upon by a tribe of admirers and flatterers, they have not light enough to see their own deficiencies, or life enough to feel their own shortcomings. How can men grow, or even desire to grow, who think themselves already arrived at full stature, and wonder that all do not admire them as much as they admire themselves? How can they approve themselves to the family of God, when they evidently are pushing themselves forward, as if they were qualified to stand in any pulpit, to preach to any congregation, and to take first and foremost rank among the servants of God? They will have to learn a different lesson before they find an abiding place in the confidence, the esteem, and the affections of the discerning family, however well they may stand in their own. "Before honour is humility." "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." The Lord bless thee, thou humble servant of the living God, who in simplicity and godly sincerity preachest what God has taught thee, and feedest the people with the food with which he hath fed thee. We would not say a word to cast down or discourage thy tried, exercised soul, weaken thy hands, or cast a slight on thy ministry. But thou wilt not think our sword too sharp or words too cutting, for, if our heart can read thine, thou lovest all that is good, and hatest every false way.

MY security is founded upon what God has done for me in Christ from everlasting; and my comfort lies in its being made known to me by the blessed Spirit, which is done in time.—*Robins.*

THOUGHTS suggested by hearing a person (speaking in prayer) make use of this expression in his petitions: "We cannot live without Christ:"

Surely I know this voice; a kindred tongue
Is this to me, my breathings are the same;
With hearty choice, then would I rank among
The names of those who thus their wants proclaim.
Our search for life in all things else is o'er:
Vain the attempt, tho' boundless in the scope;
Give us but Christ, our souls can ask no more,—
The only object and the end of hope.

Obituary.

MARTHA ABBEY.

At Barleythorpe, near Oakham, Rutland, July 14th, 1866, Martha Abbey, aged 53, after a very lingering affliction from consumption. Both her parents died when she was young; but the family were brought up so as to occupy and to retain for many years situations of great respectability in the families of noblemen.

There was always a marked difference between Martha and the rest of her family. When quite a child she would avoid playing as other children, and would slip away and get out of little parties at any time if she could contrive to do so. On some such occasions she remembered that she had read her Bible, as well as she then could do, and she would pick up anything like a serious book, and if she only met with a piece of paper upon which she found the name of Jesus, she felt that she had met with a treasure. These things marked her as an odd child amongst all her connections. She had a very peculiar reserve of character, which attended her through life, was irritable and easily offended, and had a disposition which could scarcely assimilate itself with any other, and seemed not formed for society. The Lord evidently overruled these things for the furtherance of his gracious work upon her soul; and as an old Puritan used to remark, that "grace never shone so brightly as when it was grafted upon a crab-stick," so it was evidently seen to be in her, by the few who really knew her, and who witnessed her closing days. Yet these peculiarities so wrought as to prove a bar between her and some of the Lord's living family.

She was sent into service in early years, and appeared to obtain situations which would prove stepping-stones into such families as the rest of her family were employed in, and she did enter upon one or two services of that kind. But she met with a succession of disappointments and trials, and had repeated illnesses of different kinds, and some of a very serious nature. These things led eventually to her taking a small tenement in this town where she could sit under the ministry of the Lord's dear servant, Mr. Philpot. She heard Mr. Tiptaft about 30 years ago, when he used to speak occasionally here, previously to which time she knew nothing more than a form of religion, but she was very unhappy in it, and believed there was a something to be realised to which she was a stranger. The first time she heard him, he opened plainly to her view the emptiness of a form of religion, without the power; and the solemn position she was in, was through him, as the Lord's instrument, opened up before her, and she felt sure that, dying in that state, she should never see the Lord in heaven. These dealings wrought eventually to bring her out from worldly situations, where she was obliged to attend the Church of England, and debarred from hearing the truths of the gospel, which had become very desirable to her soul. She refused an eligible offer of this kind in a family near O., and she was enabled to "choose rather to suffer affliction with the

people of God than to endure the pleasures of sin for a season." Although the power of divine grace was thus far manifest, it was some time before her state was laid with pressing weight upon her mind, so as to abide, and bring her from felt necessity to the Lord's feet, until he should appear for her help. She was much tossed about in soul, and also in circumstances in providence, being a few weeks or months in one situation, and then in another, chiefly amongst such as feared the Lord, or who made a profession of his name, where she could hear the truth preached. But she had no gift to make room for her before men, and her peculiar reserve, even to sullenness, caused some to think there might be some mental malady. Others believed, and she subsequently expressed, that it was partly constrained to avoid a multitude of words, which brought sin and guilt upon her conscience. She was manifestly in her after years very tender upon this point.

She thus became cast upon the providence of God, what little she could earn by her needle, and the assistance of a very few friends. The Lord gave her a sweet assurance that she should not want, and she was enabled to pay her rent and every debt the whole time she remained in her house, which was about 15 years. I believe she was often in straits, but if she were, she would not tell any earthly friend, lest she should dishonour the Lord; and I believe she would sooner want for daily necessaries than she would leave any debt unpaid, and thus give the enemy ground of offence against the truths she professed.

But to return to the unfolding by the Spirit of her sinful state to her view. She was enabled to cry earnestly to the Lord that he would be pleased to grant her the pardon of her sins through the blood of Christ, and the way of salvation was gradually opened to her understanding. She used to pray much for light upon the word, which she read eagerly, and used to wrestle with the Lord to give her to know for herself such Scriptures as John xvi. 13, 14. At times her ignorance seemed so great that she used to be tempted, to give up any hope of receiving the things she desired; but it pleased the gracious Lord, from time to time, to give her some portion of his word whereon to hope, especially Hos. ii. 14, 15, and, to use her own expression, she said, "O, how I used to grope to find the door of hope in the valley of Achor; and these words would follow me: 'Shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed;' and this encouraged me that the Lord would open the way for me to Christ, as my Redeemer in his time."

She was for some length of time, perhaps four or five years, before she was favoured with a satisfactory deliverance from the bondage of the law, and the redemption of her soul manifested through the blood of Christ. She was often raised to a hope under hearing Mr. P. describe her state in the ministry of the word, and once in June, 1859, under hearing him preach from 1 Pet. iv. 12, 13. He so went into her exercises that she thought she should then and there have burst forth into happy liberty. However, she said her bonds were so loosed that the enemy, with all his craft, could never so

bind her down in unbelief again; and in about three weeks afterwards Isa. lxi. 1, 2, 3, was so blessedly applied to her soul, and she was so led into its blessed contents, that she said, "My soul magnified the Lord, and my spirit rejoiced in God my Saviour."

In Sept., 1857, she went to assist to nurse in the family of the father-in-law of the writer, four members of the family being at once laid down with typhus fever, of which the father died. Martha had the fever and was much reduced, and perhaps her constitution, which was never strong, did not fully regain its former strength.

It is now nearly four years since her health began to decline, and she could do very little work of any kind. The last four years she could do nothing; but the gracious Lord fulfilled the assurance he had given her, that she should never want any good thing. She was favoured with many answers to prayer. Once, when staying with some friends four or five miles hence, she was coming down with them to hear Mr. P., she could not refrain from speaking of how she had been favoured in mentally lifting up her soul to the Lord, and how he had condescended to hear and answer her. But one of the party harshly rebuffed her and cast a suspicion upon her at all knowing what real prayer was. Being naturally sensitive and reserved, she was easily silenced; but her mind had received a deep wound, and the enemy took advantage of it to aggravate it. She went into chapel desiring greatly that the Lord would confirm what she believed he had taught her, or that he would show her if she were deceived. The service was opened by the deacon giving out Hymn 725, which was so sweetly applied, and her soul was so broken down by its suitability to her case, that the enemy was silenced, and she cared for no testimony from man, whether the Lord had or had not taught her the reality and blessedness of true Spirit-indited prayer.

She was often much favoured in her soul, in her lonely tenement, and had sweet and free intercourse with the Lord through the Spirit, with a poor frail, wearing-down body, barely supplied with the things of this life, and scarcely able to maintain, through lack of strength, her love of cleanliness. Amongst her papers she left the following note of one of the Lord's visits to her soul: "I felt the word applied: 'Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.' My mind was solemnly affected, I also wept much while the following words were applied: 'Thy happy soul will soon take its flight amongst the regions of the blessed. Behold I come quickly. Thou shalt have bright views of the new Jerusalem, proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb.' I saw, by the eye of faith, that Jesus was standing ready to welcome me home, that a messenger would convey my soul swiftly, and that death would be swallowed up in victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. I felt that I must note it down, that it might be for the comfort of survivors." It will be seen at the close that these promises were fulfilled. At one time, she had been greatly favoured in her soul with nearness to the Lord and sweet communion with him, and could not refrain from singing aloud his praises. She arose early in this blessed frame one morn-

ing to wash her clothes, when sounds of the sweetest and softest music reached her ear. She said she was absorbed in the blessed sounds, and remained through the occupation of the day, scarcely knowing whether she was in the body or out of it. She toasted a piece of bread to eat with her tea, and while partaking of it, under the Lord's manifest blessing, she felt earnest prayer going up to him that he would show her whether the sweet sounds which she heard in the morning were conveyed to her by his Spirit, for the enemy suggested that she must have been deluded. It was immediately presented to her mind that Paul heard "unspeakable words which it was not possible for a man to utter," and that she heard "unspeakable sounds," and these words fell most sweetly upon her soul: "And no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth." (Rev. xiv. 3.)

When the Lord was long absent, she would sink very low in her soul, and seem almost melancholy.

About a year and a half ago it was evident that disease in the lungs had commenced, and was making progress. She passed through much weakness and failing health, until her cough and breathing and oppression from phlegm made it unsafe for her to remain alone; and it being difficult to find a suitable person to wait upon her, a brother after the flesh, eight or nine months ago, took her to B., a mile hence, to end her days in his house. She deeply felt, for a considerable time, the loss of the quietude of her own little home, and of her own habits to which she was inured, but the Lord wrought submission to his will in his own time. She also grieved at being thus removed from her few friends. The writer went to see her, as often as circumstances permitted, and felt it a great privilege, having her own faith strengthened and her soul refreshed several times on visiting her. The Lord was pleased to work much meekness in her soul, and the sweet experience of Hart's Hymn, 872, was taught her in the furnace, especially verse 5:

"He will, by means like these,
Thy stubborn temper break;
Soften thy heart by due degrees,
And make thy spirit meek."

She had many blessed tokens of his condescension and tenderness towards her in her affliction. Heb. ii. 14 to the end was a very comfortable Scripture to her. The Lord taking our nature into union with his own divine nature was a source of great comfort to her soul. Hymn 183, especially the last verse, she said she had experienced every word of:

"By crosses I'll scourge them for sin," &c.

She would dwell much upon the great grace of the Lord in saving and bestowing such blessings upon a poor worm like herself, and Hymns 9 and 201 were very precious to her. She would speak of the Lord as manifesting such tender compassion, standing over her and soothing her body, soul, and spirit in her great sufferings, as the gentlest nurse. On one occasion she said, "The everlasting arms

are underneath me; the bulwark of eternal salvation supports me; the arm of almighty power defends me; the softest wing overshadows me; and the mantle of everlasting love hides all my deformity. When I confess I am black, the dear Lord drowns my voice in answering, "*Comehly, comehly!* Thou art all fair, my love. There is no spot in thee. Words cannot tell his goodness. I am lost in the contemplation. I must have heavenly powers to fathom heavenly blessings."

She often spoke of the helps she had received under Mr. P.'s ministry, and that of other good men who had come amongst us. She said she had often longed to join the church, and to honour the Lord in his ordinances, that her heart was with them; and she desired, if she were not presuming, that her love in Christ might be given to the friends and to our late pastor Mr. P., and also to our present pastor Mr. Knill. She several times alluded to the blessing she had under the sermon by Mr. P., from 1 Pet. iv. 12, 13, and said, "That discourse armed me against trials I have met with these seven years, and *now* I am experiencing the closing part: '*Rejoice*, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.'"

About a fortnight before she died, she was taken much worse, and was convulsed for some time. Those about her thought she was dying, and she expected so herself, and said she had peace in her soul. After this she could not talk much, but interested herself very much about four persons who were baptized and joined the church at O. on 24th; and upon being told that Mr. K. spoke in the morning from Ps. lxxxix. 1, "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever," &c., and that he could not finish the subject, and therefore took it up again on Tuesday evening, she said, "Finish it! No! I have had so many mercies that I cannot reckon them up; it will fill eternity to sing of his mercy, and we shall never exhaust the theme."

Her bodily sufferings were very great, and she was reduced to the appearance of a skeleton; she could not take anything but a very small quantity of wine or brandy and water the last fortnight. It was very blessed to witness the sweet peace and serenity of mind which the Lord favoured her with. One day she said, "Read me Ps. cxlv. Let us have one more song of praise together upon earth." She said she could join in every word of it as her own, and that the Lord brought it again to her mind, and it afforded her blessed meditation for some hours.

On July 8th, the last Lord's day of her life, when she lay so ill that at any moment her death was looked for, the enemy of her soul set in upon her with great violence. She thus communicated it: "The enemy came down upon my soul with great wrath, as with open mouth to devour me, knowing he had but a short time. I never met with such a furious onset. O! I really thought I should have been driven to utter desperation. It was as if he would seize me, body and soul. I had just power given me to look with my sorrowful eyes to the Lord; and O! I cannot *half* convey to you the blessed view he opened up to me of the dear suffering Lamb of

God, bleeding under the wrath of God for *my* sins. I was enabled to tell the devil, 'Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God and of his Christ; for the accuser of the brethren is cast down;' 'They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb.' (Rev. xii. 10, 11.) *The blood of the Lamb!* Blood has a voice! I said to the arch-fiend, 'I am not *yours*; I am come to Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels;' and I felt that there were myriads of angels guarding my soul, and waiting to convey it into the courts of bliss. Oh! I never before saw so much of what I am redeemed *from*." She could only articulate these words in broken sentences, but with a voice, and manner, and reality almost as if she were out of the earthly tabernacle.

After this she spoke very little. Once, as her friend went to her side, she said, "I am such a loathsome object for you to come near; but O, the mystery! I have a spotless soul."

On the evening before she died, when the writer saw her for the last time, and asked, "Where is your mind stayed now?" she feebly but sweetly and forcibly said, "A full Christ,—an empty sinner;" and after a time, "I am too weak to talk, and am afraid I should cause the Comforter to depart."

She took a most affectionate farewell, and gave the writer a hint of what she had previously said to her: "I asked the Lord to bestow his choicest blessings upon you, and I could think of nothing so desirable as that he would be pleased to bless his word, and open it up to your soul as he has done to mine; but the word is received in much affliction." It was a blessed privilege to witness the peace which was manifest; she expressed herself very gratefully to those who had waited upon her. She departed very gently on Saturday, July 14th. Her remains were interred in the cemetery at Oakham by Mr. Knill, at her especial request, saying, "Let my body be laid amongst my own dear friends, for I believe I shall be raised up with them in the morning of the resurrection."

The foregoing are but a few recollections of things which passed during her most painful and long illness. The writer regrets that she is unable, from lack of memory and other hindrances, to do justice to the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and to the tender compassions of the Lord, bestowed upon his tried yet favoured child; and it was surprising to find, on a more full acquaintance with her, which was afforded upon her dying bed, how her mind was instructed in the blessed truths of God, her soul comforted and stayed upon the Lord, and the power of the Lord put forth in her against her great adversary. In her were fulfilled the blessings couched in Job v. 17 to the end. She has "come to her grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season."

Oakham, July 28th, 1866.

A. F. PEAKE.

If my salvation depended upon one good thought of my own untainted with the tang of inherent pollution which is in me, and rotten at the very core, I could not command it.—*Dr. Hawker.*

OCTOBER 1, 1866.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

OCTOBER, 1866.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. I. 9; ROM. XI. 7; ACTS VIII. 37, 38; MATT. XXVIII. 19.

THE ELECT SHALL COME.

OUTLINE OF A SERMON BY THE LATE MR. WARBURTON,
PREACHED ON GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 21ST, 1848, ON THE OPENING OF A
NEW CHAPEL.

My Friends. It is generally the case when places are opened for divine worship to take a text that is considered to be adapted to the circumstances of that time and place; but I can assure you, my friends, my soul has been with God to direct me, for I cannot pick and choose texts for the opening of chapels, as people call it, and funeral sermons, and sermons adapted to different things of this nature. My soul has, I hope, been led to God for a little matter, to beg of him to fasten upon me such words as are from himself, that it may prove a blessing to some vessels of mercy; that they may have their hearts opened, as well as the chapel. No words came for some time, and I was afraid the Lord would leave me without any. But, bless his precious name, he sweetly, softly whispered in my soul these words:

“All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.”—Jno. iv. 37.

and I said, “Lord, that will do; but I want one thing more. I see that it is very sweet and good to find thy purpose will stand; but I want one thing more, that thou wilt bring it sweetly to my soul with savour, give me the opening of the mouth, and carry it home to the souls of his people.” Here, my friends, I am obliged to leave it to the Lord.

I. We shall first notice the *gift* of the Father to Jesus: “All that the Father giveth unto me shall come unto me.”

II. *What they come for.*

III. That all that the Father hath given unto Christ *shall* come unto him, and he will in *no wise* cast them out.

Then, my friends, it is fast at both ends; there is no moving out of it.

I. “All that the Father *giveth me.*” Now, it is very evident from the word of God, and is fully stated in the text, that this gift of the Father unto Christ is not for all the human race. If you will, when you

go home, read John xvii., it will do you no harm, and if it read you it will do you good. You will see throughout the whole chapter who these are. They are those that are given to Christ out of the world, singled out of the world, out of the mass of mankind, not by their own free will, not by repenting or believing, or doing and working, or anything that mortals can do. They are separated by the sovereign, electing, discriminating purpose of God from eternity, not of themselves. "Aye," says one, "I do not like that." It is nothing to me what you like. I am not come to know what you like, but to tell you what is true. God says they are a people that he calls, "a remnant according to the election of grace;" "predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son;" "Whom he did predestinate, them he called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified;" "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" So that you see this is the word of God. It is not the peculiar sentiment of these people that come to turn the world upside down with their peculiar sentiments. Search the word of God, and see whether or not these things are revealed in the Scriptures. God says, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people," &c. And, my friends, there is nothing that will stand but the word of God; and woe be to that man, living or dying, that hates the truth of God, that fights against the truth of God, that abhors the truth of God. It would be better for him that a millstone be tied about his neck and he be cast into the midst of the sea.

But, blessed be our God, the gift of the Father of this chosen people is in the hands of Christ. What has he given them into his hands for? To redeem them. God made them upright with the rest of Adam's race, but they changed into the service of the devil; so that these wretches can never approach unto God but through Christ: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done; but by his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." They were given unto Christ as their covenant Head, and he received them and calls them out of darkness into his marvellous light. Bless his precious name, they are in his hands to defend, to guide, and to bring them up at last in immortal glory to reign with him for ever and ever, with joy unspeakable and full of glory. He took them into his hands to complete this great work. All his saints are in his hands and are kept there. Yea, he says, every one of them sat at his feet to receive his blessed words. They all sat down at his feet and understood these things. "All mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them. I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for them that thou hast given me out of the world." So that you see this gift is the object of his sovereign discriminating love and choice. He set his love upon his people from eternity, and in time separates them. These are the characters, then.

II. Let us notice, then, that these characters *all* come to Christ: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." "*Shall* come." Neither sin nor anything else, put all together, shall keep them in

ignorance longer than God has fixed, not one of them. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." The time is fixed, the instrument is fixed; it is all fixed by God. As many as God has fixed are all brought to believe in God's time.

If this is the case, *what do they come for?* What do they come unto Christ for? When the work of the Spirit has already taken place in the heart, that man cannot live in the world. My friends, who are these that come unto the Lord Jesus in reality? The lame, the maimed, the lepers, such as are possessed with devils. Just look at the poor woman that had a bloody issue, she had spent all her living among physicians but was nothing better, but rather worse. She presses through the crowd with her bloody issue. It was out of the power of any human arm to help her; so she was brought out of real necessity, being stripped of all she had, to come to the Lord. And there are just the same poor creatures now, spiritually. Where the Spirit has entered into the heart and opened up all the sins, all the actions to view, there is such a bloody issue. Go where he will, the man comes at last to cry, "Lord, save, or I perish." No other spot whatever. Feeling the burden of his guilt and misery, as a miserable, lost, wretched sinner, this man, my friends, will come to Christ, will follow Christ. The world may tell him there is no hope for him, and will tell him to give it all up. He will think of Judas, Cain, and Esau, reprobate silver that God has rejected for ever and ever; and he makes up his mind to put an end to his existence; and he would do it, my friends, if God suffered him. I know what it is to be there. I have taken the razor up stairs. I recollect the time. I thought I would go upon my knees and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner," just before I did it. Then a little hope sprang up, and then the word came: "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." I cried, "Aye, Lord, such a wretch as I?" My soul seemed to have a little hope.

My friends, there is nowhere else for such a soul to come to but Christ. Now let me ask you, in the presence of God, Are you come to Christ? Or have you come to this place of worship out of curiosity, to hear this poor countryman and see who is here? Ah, poor soul! Have you ever considered that the eye of God is upon you? Have you ever come to Christ with your sins burdening you down? "O! methinks," says one, "I have never been such a great sinner. I have never been guilty of telling lies, or Sabbath-breaking, &c. I consider that I am not one of that character." Have you ever considered that God says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and love thy neighbour as thyself?" Has it ever struck your mind what God says, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point is guilty of all?" Have you ever thought what God says again: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them?" And Christ says, "Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery?" and, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods?" Have you never coveted? Now, where is your

piety? Poor sinner, if God leaves thee doing thy best and resting on thy duties, and thou never knowest anything of thy heart being broken, and coming to Christ as a lost sinner, O what an eternity of wrath will thy soul sink into! Hell was never made for beasts or dogs. You, poor sinners, who feel and know these things, you do not want whipping to Christ. The poor sinner is brought to know there is no other spot to come to. He never could hope for mercy till his sins and iniquities are blotted out. They have to come to Christ for wisdom to teach them, and power to keep them from day to day. Christ is their Rock and Resting-place. There is no other rock and resting-place but Christ. They have to come to him, from time to time, for him to be made known in their hearts as the Lord their Righteousness. O what a sweetness there is when this is the case! But, my friends, when there is nothing but emptiness, what misery it is. We try to move our hard hearts, as hard as the nether millstone. I am one of the hardest learners in Christ's school, and that text of Scripture has given me many a good stroke: "This people draw near to me with their mouth and honour me with their lips, but their heart is far from me." By-and-bye a sweet drop comes from the everlasting hills, and my hard heart gives way. O how sweet it is when the Lord comes in! O how it brings Christ and the soul together!

These people have to come to Christ in all their sad *temptations*, that their souls have to pass through. Many of God's children think their case is so singular; they think that a child of God can never have such awful blasphemies running through his mind. "Aye," says one soul, "that is the spot; that is the thing. I have sinned against the Holy Ghost." What! Hast thou sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost? The Holy Ghost encourages thee to pray against it. The devil cannot get thy heart nor thy lips to utter it. My friends, I have before now been obliged to raise my hand to my lips to keep me from blaspheming. I thought I was a hardened professor and a hypocrite, and that God was about to make it known. "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." These awful temptations of the devil are no bad sign, when they make thee unhappy. The devil never would have put this in thy heart if he loved thee. When thou wast in thy state of darkness he never troubled thee with these things. The Lord will appear for thee in his own time.

This is the best academy to put a parson in. The Lord put me here to fit some of the people of God. "Whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation which is effectual in the enduring of things which we also suffer; or whether we be comforted it is for your consolation and salvation." For weeks I could not possibly believe the Lord would have mercy on my soul; but when he came he had nothing to do but speak. He spoke with sweet power: "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night

unto him?" My soul had been crying day and night for thirteen weeks, and I was brought into a happy liberty. My soul escaped; and what a happy and glorious liberty it was! How sweetly and blessedly he spoke! "For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Yes, bless his precious name, all the devil can do is to bite and nibble at the heel; and when God delivers thee thou shalt shout "Victory!" and crown Jesus Lord of all. "My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth."

Here the people have been obliged to come for *direction*. When distress comes to a child of God, he has to come to Christ for temporal as well as spiritual things. All the gold and silver are his, and all the cattle upon a thousand hills. My soul is obliged to come to Christ to teach me how to speak, how to eat, how to drink; all to the glory of the Lord; for there never was such a fool as I am, or ever will be. I am obliged to come to him for everything; righteousness to cover me, a fountain to cleanse, light to shine, glorious victory to bring my soul out of every spot; for of him and through him and to him are all things; to whom be glory for ever and ever.

My friends, there is an aching void that nothing can fill up. Through this winter the Lord has paid me many blessed visits. I have had some hard wrestlings with the enemy for weeks in this gloomy way; but when the Lord speaks, one visit from the blessed Jesus makes amends for all. We see all comes from one Father. We learn that by God's sovereignty it is only the means to make it up and make amends for all. But these are but drops; they are so dazzling. I can speak of it as I ought to do when I get home.

III. All *shall* come: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." It is not he that is full of joy. If thou art as black as Satan, and art the biggest fool that ever had an existence, he will in no wise cast thee out. I tell you, my friends, what comes into my mind. Those that the Father hath given to Christ are sweetly knit together in the covenant of grace. As Peter describes it: "And there came a voice, saying, Arise, Peter, kill and eat. And Peter said, Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." There were creeping things, fourfooted beasts, fowls of the air, &c., dropped down from heaven. Then the sheet was let down, and they were all taken up to heaven. "What!" say you, "Are there such poor crawling things in heaven?" My friends, I believe God's account. It is such a way that the devil could never unravel it. David says he was a worm and no man, a sparrow alone on the housetop. Nay, David; for here is another one,—poor old John Warburton. Job says he was a brother to dragons and a companion of owls. What God says of himself that must be true, you know. "The beasts of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls." Why, they are queer sorts of things to honour God, are they not? But these people cannot compare themselves to anything ugly enough, nor vile enough; sometimes they think Satan himself is in their hearts. They are all ugly enough in themselves, but in the dear Jesus there is no spot nor wrinkle in them, nor any such

thing. Because "I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen." "This people have I formed for myself; they shall sing forth my praise."

My friends, they will never fall out of the covenant. They are all safe in Christ. They are all secured in the promises of God. They will never be cast out. Then let the child of God go where he may, he will never get beyond the bounds of God's promise. If he sinks in unbelief, God says his promise shall stand. There they are centred, in his glory, and they will never be cast out.

But the poor child of God wants a manifestation of it in his heart, and nothing short of this will do for him. Nothing short of this would do for poor Mary Magdalene. Christ told Simon her sins were forgiven her. Yet he did not turn to Mary, though it was very probable that Mary heard it, but she still sat at his feet weeping. But by and bye he turned to Mary, and instead of *her* sins, it is *thy* sins; and Mary's heart rejoiced. Her soul was full of wonder, and your poor guilty souls want to feel this. Poor dear soul, wait on the Lord, for the vision is for an appointed time. In the end it shall speak and not tarry. Wait for it, because it will surely come; it will not tarry. Tell the Lord of it, poor soul. He will not be angry. I have always found that the Lord is never offended at my telling him. Poor soul! Thou canst go nowhere else, but beg and wait for the appointed time. What a sorry hobbling job the poor creature at the pool had of it; but Christ came by, and said, blessed be his dear lips, "Wilt thou be made whole?" He said, "I have no one to put me in the pool; and then, with his God-like voice, he said, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk."

He will in no wise cast out. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And all these comers shall find that the Lord is their all and in all.

O that it may please the Lord that some vessel of mercy may feel the power of God in his heart!

May the Lord bless these few remarks, and he shall have all the glory.

THE soul of man is of a vast and boundless comprehension, so that, if all created good were centered 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, nor satisfaction to his desires.—*Dr. Owen.*

"DEATH, the blest messenger that wafts the soul,
Where foes no more infest, nor storms control;
Where joys eternal flow in purest streams,
And everlasting glory sheds its beams.
There shall the spirit bow before the throne,
Shall see untainted bliss and find its own;
No clouds of flesh shall dim the enraptured flight,
In those blest realms of everlasting light;
But pure, refulgent visions glad the view
Of him, the only gracious, just, and true.
There is the spirit's rest, its last abode,
The overwhelming glory of its God.

Rogers. [Martyred.]

THE DEALINGS OF GOD WITH MY SOUL.

BY ONE WHO HAS LOST HIS NATURAL EYES, BUT FOUND SPIRITUAL ONES.

Dear Sir,—I long have had a desire to let you know of the dealings of God with me. Being moved with fear, I now begin.

My parents beginning to sit under your ministry about the time I was born, they kept me very strict on the Sabbath day. When I was big enough to walk, I went with them to Mr. Pickering's meeting, it being about four miles from my home.

The first thoughts that I can remember about God and eternity were when I heard the spiritual conversation of my father and a few others on our way home. I used to wonder whether I should go to heaven, whether God would save such a one as myself. I had very great desires to ask my parents, but dared not; and some of my sins which I was guilty of came to my mind; so I feared God would not save me. But one Saturday night, in summer it was, as my mother would not let us go out of the yard to play, after our shoes were cleaned, I asked her for a few half-pence; so I made a hole, and began to amuse myself by playing at chuck; when it came strongly upon my mind that this should be a token between God and my soul that if the halfpence went into the hole I should go to heaven, if not I should go to hell; and to my great joy and comfort, as I thought then, they all went into the hole; and I then blessed and praised God. Thus, Sir, I am telling you a few of my thoughts when I was a little boy.

I can remember once going into a plantation to climb for sparrows. When I had got a good height upon one of the trees, I got on one of the branches two or three yards' distance from the ball of the tree, having hold with my hands and feet, my back being downwards. There I hung until I was almost exhausted, not knowing how to get to the ball of the tree again. I looked downwards, fearing that if I fell it would kill me, and then I began to pray to God, and by some means, I cannot say how, I got to the ball of the tree and came down and rested myself; and I then blessed and praised God for my great deliverance. Thus I used to pray to God when I was in trouble; but when I was out of danger I forgot him.

My parents put me to school to learn to read and write; and when I was about 12 years old I went to drive plough and to work in the summer, and in the winter I went to school. Here I stayed two summers. Then my master hired me for a year. When my year was up, I wanted another situation, and I knew not what to do, for I could not bear the thought of being out of place; but on the next day after I left my place I met with one of my town's boys. He asked me if I was hired. I said, "No; are you?" He said, "No, but I have been to see for a place at Scanington, and they bade me three pounds for the year, but I would not take so little;" but, as he was stouter than I, I thought it was enough for me; so I went home and told my father, and we went and I got the place. Here I view the hand of Providence in fixing the bounds of my habitation. My mistress told me that she should expect me to go to

the church and chapel, which I was willing to do. At this village I stayed almost four years, when I was brought away by a severe accident, which you will see in this letter. I had never heard the Methodists preach before I went there. I very often felt in great trouble and distress while hearing them preach about hell and damnation, so much that they would make the tears run down my face. I thought to myself, how much better I would be, and strive against sin; but I could not keep myself from sinning.

One Sunday, after I had been to chapel, I felt very much distressed indeed. It came strongly into my mind to go and pray to God; so I went up stairs to pray, but I could say but very few words, only cry to God to pardon me. I thought if I could but pray as these good men could, I should soon be fit for heaven; but I could not. I knew not what to do. I thought to myself I would take good heed to my ways; so for a few days I tried to keep myself from sin in thought, word, and deed, and at night I would examine myself as to how I had spent the day; but I found so very many failings that I thought I would keep myself from what sins I could, and then I hoped the Lord would forgive me the rest.

One Sunday I went to a little village, intending to go to an anniversary meeting. There were two or three young men going to a public house; and I walked with them until we came to the house. I thought if I did not go in with them and have a pint they would call me a shabby fellow; so I went in with them; but I felt the anger of God and the lashes of my conscience, so that I knew not what to do. I thought, "It is the Sabbath day. I am doing very wrong." When we came out, they went home and I went another way by myself, to shepherd some sheep of my master's. When I got into the lane again, I was seized with a violent pain in my stomach. I was obliged to lie down, and was afraid I was going to die. "If I do," thought I, "what will become of me?" I thought it was so great a sin to go to an alehouse on a Sunday; so I began to repent and beg of God for forgiveness, promising if he would pardon me and take away the pain, I would do so no more. In a little time the Lord took away the pain; so I got up and went home promising to do better. This was the first time I went into a public house on a Sunday, and it was the last.

Thus I went on sinning and repenting. I found that I had no power against sin, but was led captive by the devil at his will. About this time I went to Newark to hear you preach. In your first prayer you were led to pray that the Spirit would apply the blood of sprinkling to our consciences, for which I longed, feeling myself a sinner. The tears ran down my face; but I could not understand your preaching. I thought if I could but hear you oftener, I should soon be better. I went to hear you again, but I could not much understand you; yet I liked your preaching better than the Methodists'. The next time I went to their chapel, after I had been to hear you, just as I was going in at the door these words came suddenly into my mind: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate. Touch not the unclean thing, and I will re-

ceive you, saith the Lord; and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." But I thought, "Surely it cannot mean coming out from this people;" so I went in.

About this time my mother had a dream. She dreamed that she saw me in a very poor state, my back all over wounds. The next time I went home my mother told me her dream, to which I said I hoped I should never be so bad as that, and I told her I had been tenting birds, and she cautioned me, and told me to be very careful with the gun. This was on Monday that I went home, and on the next Saturday morning, July 30th, 1836, I was just turned 19 years of age. I went round with the gun as usual, and I loaded it heavily that time, thinking of meeting with a crane, as I had seen one or two before; but I returned home without shooting. When I came to the yard, I saw two sparrows. I lifted the gun to my shoulder, and a thought struck me that my master would be angry if I shot so near the house, all of them being in bed; so I took the gun into the kitchen. I took hold of the cap to take it off; but as there had been a little rain I thought it might have got wet, and I did not take it off. I got upon a stool to reach down the gun cover, placing the butt end on the stool; and while I was putting the cover on, the gun slipped off and exploded. It wounded my right hand and took off the buckles from the belt that I wore round my waist. It missed my belly, but shot my breast a little, and then my face, and caught my eyes. Here I lay, weltering in my blood. At the first they dared not touch me, till a neighbour came in and said, "Somebody must touch him." She wrapped my hand up in a towel and raised me up, and set me in a chair. Then I felt the wrath of God and the guilt of sin, and I expected death would follow. I felt as if I would fly from it if I could, but I knew I could not. I kneeled down, with the help of them that were with me, and prayed to God; and I felt quite willing to give God my heart and all into his hands. After this I felt much composed and quiet. When the doctor came he washed me, and put me to bed. On the next day three or four surgeons came to see me. One of them examined my hand and said it had only just missed the artery; but he said he was sure I should die, for my heart was affected. On the fourth day there was a great change. They all thought I was taken for death, as I lay gasping, thinking every breath would be my last. When bedtime came, my master and mistress bade me good bye, expecting never more to see me alive. I heard my nurse say that when I was dead she would rub me with saltpetre to make me keep a few days, as the weather was so hot; but about two o'clock in the morning the Lord stilled my heart, and it was put right again; and then I dozed a little. In the morning, to their great surprise, I was alive and something better.

From that time I slowly recovered, and in about a month I was able to ride home in a cart on a bed. My master was very kind to me, and sent me some good things. A lady in our village sent me a bottle of wine, and my good friend Pickering sent me a bottle of

port. With the blessing of God, in three or four months I was recovered to a middling state of health.

Then began my trouble. The Lord smote my conscience, I hope effectually. One day as I sat in the house all my sins came to my mind that I had committed from a child. The guilt of them and the wrath of God lay a heavy weight on my conscience. There were not only my actual transgressions, but my original sin. All my self-righteous props gave way. I felt I was the vilest creature, the greatest sinner in the whole world. I felt that there was not another such sinner. I trembled from head to foot; and these words came with great power: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." I feared God was going to cut me off and send me to hell. I got up out of my chair and went into the parlour to pray. When I kneeled down, there appeared before my mind Moses with his law, accusing me, and the devil resisting me. I cried out in the bitterness of my heart, in the anguish of my soul, "God be merciful to me a sinner." When I began to cry to God, Moses gave over accusing me. I still kept crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and Jesus Christ appeared to look with pity on me as if he would save me if he could; but the devil still resisted me; but as I still kept praying, the devil seemed to lose his hold, and these words came to my mind: "I will clothe thee with change of raiment: Let them set a fair mitre upon his head." These words encouraged me, and raised me to hope, and I felt a little eased of my burden. Being so greatly troubled, it caused a violent pain in my stomach. My parents sent for the doctor again, and he gave me an emetic; but it did me no good. The wound was too deep for it to remove it.

One night, when I was in bed, I felt the wrath of God and the burden of sin so heavy upon me that I thought every moment I should drop into hell. My pillow was wet with sweat and tears. I could not help crying out, "Lord, have mercy upon me." My mother, hearing me, came to try to comfort me; but she could do me no good. I felt quite sure I should go to hell, when these words came to my mind: "In six troubles I will be with thee, yea, in seven no evil shall touch thee;" which comforted me a little and encouraged me still to cry to God. But my burden would return again with a heavy weight upon my conscience. "O," thought I, "what is the loss of my eyes to the loss of my never-dying soul?" I remember these words came to my mind: "The whole need not a physician, but those that are sick. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." I could not remember ever hearing such words before, but they encouraged me. When I heard of Jesus Christ saving sinners, I felt a great hungering and thirsting after righteousness; but I feared he would not save me, I felt such a vile sinner. I used to cry, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean;" but I was afraid he would not. I no longer hated the light, but wanted to come to the light. I was made willing to be saved in God's own way. I felt that if I was not saved freely by grace I could not be saved at all; for I had broken his righteous

law, and he says, "He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all." I could not live without prayer. There was a continual crying to God the first thing in a morning and the last at night. Once when I was in great trouble and distress, my father began to read a book to me which was Mr. Huntington's "Destruction of Death and the Fountain of Life," in which he shows the difference between a hypocrite and one who is quickened by the Holy Ghost. I felt such contrition, godly sorrow, meekness, and joy, I asked my father whose writing it was, and I said I was sure if that man was right I was; and I felt a great love for him, though I had never seen him; but I was soon filled again with doubts and fears. When I heard the Scriptures read, particularly those places where God is speaking to his elect in such passages as these: "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee;" "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and mine elect in whom my soul delighteth," I felt such longings after God. Thought I, "O that I was one of those whom God loves with an everlasting love; but I fear I am not, I am such a vile sinner." Bunyan's "Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ" was a precious book to me.

About this time I began to go to Mr. Pickering's meeting, where I heard Mr. Huntington's "Kingdom of Heaven Taken by Prayer" read, in which he gives an account of his deep soul-trouble. I thought I was just like him; and when Mr. P. prayed, he prayed for everything that I wanted. O how my soul longed and panted after a sense of Christ's love to my soul. "O!" thought I, "these are the blessed people of God;" and I felt such a love to them as I never did to any people before. "O!" thought I, "this people shall be my people. May their God be my God."

One Sunday morning, when I went to prayer before I went to the meeting, when I had kneeled down such blasphemous thoughts against God came into my mind I started up and cried like a child, and knew not what to do; and it was suggested to my mind that I need not go to the meeting, for I was not elected; but I went. I believe Satan knew that he was about to lose me, he so laid about him with his evil suggestions and temptations; but when I came to the meeting, feeling very much distressed and cast down with the burden of sin upon my conscience, I felt the vilest creature in the place, not worthy to come amongst them. Mr. P. read a discourse from these words: "And they shall know every man the plague of his own heart." He showed that it was the elect, and the elect only, who felt the plague of their own hearts. This was good news indeed to me, and greatly encouraged me to go on seeking the Lord.

About this time you came to preach at Bottesford. It was the first time you preached in Mrs. Parnham's barn, and I went to hear you. I cannot now recollect the words you preached from, but you so described the way which I had been brought, that I had been condemned by the law, the word came with such power it cut me off from all hope of being justified by the law, and you pointed me to Christ Jesus, who was the only Saviour of lost sinners, and you said there never was a real desire after Christ Jesus but the Holy

Ghost had put it there; and you also showed the blessed state of a believer. But I could not believe as yet that he was my Saviour; yet I was very much encouraged, and felt sure that I was in the way. I could now begin to understand your preaching. I heard you again from these words: "Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily." I was very much comforted and strengthened at this time, and encouraged still to pray and cry to God for deliverance. I remember I once went to pray, feeling heavily burdened, when I could only say a few words; but I felt such longings, such desires after the Lord Jesus, feeling my lost estate by nature, that these words came with power: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." I felt such contrition and melting of soul I was enabled a little to cast my burden upon him, but I thought it too great a thing for me that he should bear my sins. O how I wept at the thought of his compassion towards me! and I felt very much eased of my burden.

But I soon began to doubt and fear again. Sometimes I felt the burden of sin almost gone; then I feared it was gone off without an application of the blood of sprinkling to my conscience; then I felt that I could not rest without that, I felt such hungering and thirsting after the Lord Jesus Christ, I felt such wrestlings with God in prayer, and I could not get off my knees without a sense of his love. I really felt, at times, that Jesus Christ was coming into my heart, and some sweet passage of Scripture would also come to my mind to encourage me still to seek him. This once came to my mind: "The vision is for an appointed time. Though it tarry, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not tarry."

I was in very deep distress at times. My father grew a little wheat, and one day, as I was walking round it to frighten away the birds, I felt in great distress, feeling my lost estate, and feeling such a vile sinner. Many of my sins coming to my mind, some of them appeared so great I thought that God could not pardon me and be just; I felt in such a despairing way that I cannot describe; but I began to cry to God, and I felt such a spirit of prayer that I lay down in the furrow with my face on the ground, when these words came to my mind: "I will put my mouth in the dust, if so be there might be hope." "O!" I said, "I will put my mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope for me in the dear Lord Jesus." As I still continued wrestling with God in prayer, these words came to my mind: "All manner of sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven unto men." I rose up and pondered the words over in my mind. Thought I, "All manner. This must include all my sins. He does not say, 'I will pardon this little sin and not that great one,' but '*all manner* of sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven unto men.'" O this sweet promise! Although at this time perfect love had not cast out all fear, yet it let me know that God was able to save me and encouraged me still to go on seeking him by prayer, hearing, reading, and going to the meeting. I had such a thirst for God that I longed for the courts of God, and I was very much comforted at the meet-

ing and encouraged to seek him. I once went to the meeting and Mr. P. read a discourse from these words: "I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day." "O," thought I, "that I was like Paul. He knew in whom he believed, but I could not believe." Feeling my wretched state, I was much cast down, and on my road home, Satan suggested to my mind that I could not believe because I was not elected. His temptations were violent upon me, they made me almost go distracted, and I felt such wickedness in my heart it came to my mind that I need not go to the meeting any more, for I was not elected; but when I had got about half way home, there was such a sweet frame came over me that it came to my mind, "You are elected;" "You are elected," for several times together. My heart was filled with joy and comfort. Such glory shone into my heart that it almost overcame me, I felt such melting of soul and gratitude to God. This was a sweet token for good, and greatly encouraged me.

(To be concluded in our next.)

A LETTER BY THE LATE W. CROUCH.

Dear Brother in Christ,—I remember, when I was with you the last time, Mr. W. said they would drain me dry before my return; which was nearly or quite the case, as it respects any sensible springing up in my soul. For several miles on my road home I had a companion, who, though he was not very unpleasant, yet there was nothing to be gathered that was profitable. However, at length I turned aside to take some refreshment, and while I was sitting in the house, and the landlord was talking with me, suddenly my thoughts were turned upon the ministry of the word, knowing that the time was fast approaching when I must be engaged again; and as I was thinking, a soft but powerful and pleasant voice whispered within me and said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." From that moment the springs began to flow, and I found myself furnished for the evening. I went forth greatly comforted in my own heart, that I might comfort others with the same things wherewith I had been comforted of God.

I thought much of G. W., whose countenance is expressive of much grief in his heart, and concluded that my subject might have been somewhat suitable to his case; and here I send him just the outlines of the discourse, from the words as above, which begin with a benediction: "Blessed." Numerous are the cases, and acts, in which the children of God are said to be blessed; and here it is such as are poor in spirit; and as there are but two estates in the present, as well as in the world to come,—the one accursed and the other blessed,—let G. W. and all others know and understand that as many as are of the works of the law are accursed; but those who through the law (applied in its spirituality to the conscience) are dead to the law, are no longer under it, nor are they condemned thereby; I mean as it respects their present estate; for as the text

says they are blessed, they cannot be accursed; and what Christ has said cannot be overthrown.

I took occasion, then, to say that the person who is poor in spirit is in and under the new covenant; for that the first covenant pronounced all accursed that are found under it, and the second covenant pronounced all to be blessed who are in and under that. For "blessed are the poor in spirit." Which leads me to notice,

That the poor are such as feel themselves in a needy, destitute case, and cannot be satisfied unless they know themselves to be in possession of the true riches of grace, remission of sins, and righteousness. Here I remarked of David, who, though he had great temporal estates, yet says of himself, "But I am poor and needy." And never did the Lord make any one sinner feel his poverty, but with the full design to make him rich.

Again. To be poor in spirit is to be of a sorrowful spirit. God will not have his children long together to be cheerful in anything short of his blessed self; and here I took notice of Hannah, who said to Eli, "I *am* a woman of a sorrowful spirit." When there is a godly sorrow in the spirit, it will surely have its issue in the great salvation of Christ. (See 2 Cor. vii. 10.) It also signifies that such are of a broken spirit, being unable any longer to pursue their own natural inclinations, or live in rebellion against the Almighty. They are like the rock or the vessel that is dashed in pieces; and although they are reproached as being cowardly, sorry, and stupid creatures, and may sometimes think so themselves, yet they cannot get away from what they are the subjects of feeling in themselves. Here I said this fitted them to offer the acceptable sacrifice to God.

Included in the above words is that of a "meek and quiet spirit," in which you will find great tenderness and sympathy with a suffering Christ, and all his suffering members, and a stillness under the afflictive dispensation. This estate, however long the person is kept in suspense, shall at length be blessed with salvation.

Then cometh the inheritance: "Theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Of this kingdom I said it was not in riches, grandeur, or pompous show; for says the Saviour, "The kingdom of God is within you." It is out of the sight of the world, and oftentimes from the real possessor himself; yet it being a great truth, as Paul hath said, "For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power," when it enters it breaks in pieces and destroys all the works and kingdom of Satan and sin within us.

Wherefore, then, although the kingdom of God is not in meat or drink, yet it is in "*righteousness, peace, and joy* in the Holy Ghost."

First, *righteousness*, which was brought in by the active and passive obedience of Christ revealed in the everlasting gospel, and imputed to every one who has ceased from working and believes. And blessed are they who hunger and thirst after it.

Secondly, *peace* made by Christ through his engagements, and blood-shedding betwixt God and sinners; and by the application of that precious blood, cleansing and healing the conscience. This peace floweth like a river, and the glory of God as a flowing stream.

Thirdly, *joy* that is produced when the heart is raised in hope of the mercy of God in Christ, but more particularly when the man child is brought forth within us, that we can say, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." But all this must be in the Holy Ghost.

May the reader or hearers of this letter be as much afraid of putting that away which God hath promised, held forth, and giveth, as they are afraid of acting presumptuously by taking that which they suppose is not their own.

Thus I have given you the outlines of the discourse; and may the Holy Spirit, which brought it to my heart, send it home to yours.

Since I left you the last time I have been very poorly, and I continue the same to this day; so that what with sickness in my body and being hurt with a fall from my horse, together with circumstances which we cannot foresee, I must put it off a little longer before I come up again; and you may depend on it that it will be as soon as I can.

If you have made a beginning of printing the letters, send me word; if not, delay it until you hear from or see me again.

Give my unfeigned love to all who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth. And believe me to remain in the bonds of the everlasting covenant,

Your willing Servant in Christ,
Wadhurst, 21st March, 1829. WM. CROUCH.

SHE SHALL SING THERE AS IN THE DAYS OF HER YOUTH.

Dear Friend,—I write to say I arrived safely at my habitation, and found all at home better than when I left, through the tender mercies of my covenant God towards me.

And now I would say a little about Him from whom cometh all our help, the Christ of God and the Son of God, the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his Person, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and by whom alone every attribute of divine perfection was made to meet and harmonise in the complete salvation of the elect of God.

Truly it was always against him that Satan and all the powers of darkness did gather themselves to stop his course in coming to redeem his dear God-loved bride,—in Cain, the first blind Arminian; in Ham, the mocker at sin; in Pharaoh, the attempting destroyer of the seed of Abraham, from whom the promised seed, Christ, was to come; and all the idolatrous nations, with the wicked kings, princes, nobles, priests of Baal, and the whole posse of false prophets,—all were agreed to stop praying breath for Christ's coming, if they could, by waging war against godly kings, God-anointed priests, and honest, true, and faithful prophets, by persecuting them to the death. But, notwithstanding all their combined rage and madness, God, our most holy Father, found out a way to make the wrath of man to praise him, by sending forth his own co-equal Son, to take upon him our true nature in all points except its sin

But no sooner does the Son of God appear as the Son of man, in order to do what none but God can do, make justice to smile with mercy upon her knees, that poor sensibly guilty sinners may, through faith, by the Holy Ghost, see a heart-comforting and soul-melting sight, than all the residue of wrath in men and devils is stirred up against him. "See this is Zion's King," says Satan to Herod; "and if you do not find out where he is and kill him, your kingdom and greatness will soon come to nought." "This is the heir," say the self-made pious priests, scribes, lawyers, and Pharisees; "come let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours." They did kill him, and out of his death cometh every blessing and blessedness that ever did or ever will constitute the elect's life and living in time and eternity. But God has said the residue of wrath he will restrain; and the church of Christ, chosen in him, will have to continually celebrate the high praises of God and the Lamb, in spite of old Satan and all the lies and liars that he fills the world with against both God's true anointed Son and his true spiritual worshippers, who ever did and ever will render equal worship, love, praise, and adoration to the Son as to the Father and the Holy Ghost. And notwithstanding all the peevishness, murmuring, and foolish humours that the churches have always shown, it is said, by Jesus, that "All the churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins;" and as often as he does so, the people of God are sure to feel and find something not very pleasing to the flesh; for there is "the whip for the horse, the bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back; which accounts for our so seldom getting a smile from God. But as God has a bottle for the tears of godly repentance, he is sure to remember their tears, sighs, cries, and conscience-sore pains; and he gives them to look again to the blood of atonement, and to test its never-failing virtues in multiplying pardons; which puts a new song into their mouths, for they never thought of singing again after such base abuse of such Godlike love, grace, and mercy. But God says she shall sing even in her wilderness state as in the days of her youth.

June 5th, 1860.

G. MOORE.

SHALL NOT THE JUDGE OF ALL THE EARTH DO RIGHT?

Dear Joseph,—How many painful and mysterious circumstances in mind, body, and estate, are cast as the lot into the lap of the heirs of grace and glory in their sojourning through this enemy's country to fairer worlds on high! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

"And if our dearest comforts fall
Before his sovereign will,
He never takes away our all;
Himself he gives us still."

I have heard of your peculiar affliction. Job said, what he greatly feared had come upon him. I rejoice to hear that the blessed Author and Finisher of faith is nourishing and cherishing your faith

in your hour of trial. O what an infinite mercy for you to be enabled to put your faith as a seal upon the Lord's sealed testimony: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Had it been the will of the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, I should like to have seen you once more on earth, and my other friends I used to meet with you; but I have no present expectation. The Lord has dealt very mercifully with the dear partner of my life and myself as it regards our bodies. We have been better this winter yet than we have been for many, many winters past. I have great cause to bless his holy name. As ever yours,

London, Nov. 27th, 1854.

STEPH. DARK.

COUNTRY EMBLEMS.—By JOHN FLAVEL, 1691.

UPON THE PLOUGHING OF CORN LAND.

THE ploughman guides his plough with care and skill,
So doth the Spirit in sound conviction still.

THEE'S skill in ploughing, that the ploughman knows;
For if too shallow or too deep he goes,
The seed is either buried, or else may
To rooks and daws become an easy prey.
This, as a lively emblem, firmly may
Describe the blessed Spirit's work and way;
Whose work on souls, with this doth symbolize.
Betwixt them both thus the resemblance lies:
Souls are the soil, conviction is the plough
God's workmen draw, the Spirit shows them how;
He guides the work, and in good ground doth bless
His workmen's pains with sweet and fair success.
The heart prepared, he scatters in the seed,
Which, in its season, springs. No fowl nor weed
Shall pick it up, or choke this springing corn,
Till it be housed in the heavenly barn.
When thus the Spirit ploughs up the fallow ground,
When with such fruits his servants' work is crown'd,
Let all the friends of Christ, and souls say now,
As they pass by the fields, "God speed the plough."
Sometimes this plough, thin shelly ground doth turn;
That little seed which springs, the sunbeams burn;
The rest uncover'd lies, which fowls devour.
Alas! their hearts were touch'd, but not *with power*;
The cares and pleasures of this world have drown'd
The seed, before it peep'd above the ground.
Some springs indeed, the Scripture saith that some
Do taste the powers of the world to come. (Heb. vi. 5.)
These embryos never come to timely birth,
Because the seed that's sown wants depth of earth.
Turn up, O God, the bottom of my heart,
And to the seed that's sown, do thou impart
Thy choicest blessing. Though I weep and mourn
In this wet seed-time, if I may return
With sheaves of joy, these fully will reward
My pains and sorrows, be they ne'er so hard.

HE SHALL DELIVER THEE IN SIX TROUBLES; YEA IN SEVEN THERE SHALL NO EVIL TOUCH THEE.

Long looked for come at last, and the blessing of God with it, thanks be to his name for ever and ever.

I see where you are. You are treading in the footsteps of the flock. God is with you, let the devil and corruptions say what they will to the contrary; and I can truly say I am with you too. My soul was melted within me while reading your savoury epistle. I thank my God for inclining the heart of Mrs. M. to pray for you. May the Lord continue to bless you together; and while you are fighting under one wing of our glorious Captain, I hope my poor dear wife and I shall be found fighting under another, and that, after a few more conflicts, we shall meet you in the heavenly Canaan, to praise redeeming love together, through an endless eternity.

I am not unacquainted with that spirit of bitterness you speak of. I have felt much of it. I have many times thought I should be left alone; that my wife and children, though dear to me at other times, would be forced to quit me, and leave me to crawl through life, like some vagabond. Indeed, so desperate have I been, that I have actually endeavoured to make my dear wife and lads as miserable as myself; but O, my brother! I speak this to my shame, and to the honour of God, who has condescended to save such a wretch. How true it is that God hath chosen the base things of the world; for a baser thing never was chosen of God than I sometimes feel myself to be; but this feeling is to prevent flesh glorying in his presence.

I have, for some time, been sorely tried, respecting private prayer. Never in my life did I find greater opposition thereto. It is, in general, a mere drudgery, a painful task; while upon my knees plotting and planning some foolish thing, or my thoughts roving to the end of the earth. This is, indeed, hard work, toiling to no profit; and what adds to my calamity, whenever I hear the word preached, (which is not very often,) although it appears to be truth, and I believe is the truth according to the letter of the Scriptures, yet I feel no more than the seat I sit upon. This tries me not a little, and at times I am at my wits' end to know what to do, or how to act; but these things I ponder in my mind, not daring even to mention them fully to my wife, for fear of hurting her mind, and adding to her cross, which I would not do when in my right mind.

I believe this to be a dark and trying day to the Israel of God. They are driven into their holes, and when they are to creep out, I know not. One thing I know, there is nothing too hard for the Lord, who has said, "For a small moment I have forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment," (and our whole life is only a vapour,) "but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy redeemer;" and these precious promises belong to the two old friends, Joseph and William.

My dear friend finds his business burdensome, and I can assure you, I find mine the same. I sometimes tell my wife that I will relinquish it, and take a little hut with two rooms, and she and I will live together, without either servant, dog, or cat. Then I think I had better hobble on a little longer, as that might be better for the lads.

Another thing plagues my brother, and that is much darkness of soul. In this I am a full match for him; for it is only now and then that I can see my way to the city of habitation; but the Lord having promised to lead the blind by a way they know not, he will lead us, my brother, and not forsake us when hoary hairs appear. No; he has been with us in six troubles, and has promised not to leave us in the seventh. Our journey in the wilderness is nearly ended. We are drawing near to Jordan, at which I often shrink, but through which I have a hope that I shall walk safely in the hand of my blessed Jesus.

I thank my dear friend for his kind invitation of the old folks and boys to Lewes. One thing I can say, although I may never more set a foot in Sussex, there is not a family on earth I wish to see so much as that of Joseph Morris, of Lewes. My sons often talk about visiting Lewes; and should they live, and nothing particular occur, it is probable that may be the case, in the course of a year or two. I wish you would let some of your children come to Manchester. They would meet with a hearty welcome, and see such things as they cannot see elsewhere.

We unite in kind love to you all. Believe me, my dear brother, yours, in the best of Bonds.

Dec. 29th, 1818.

W. HUDSON.

MOURNING WITHOUT THE SUN.

My dear Sister,—I know not how it is with you, but I very much resemble "Little Faith," of whom Huntington says he made a world of haste, but little speed. I creep when I would fly; nay, what is worse, go back instead of forward. What is all religion without power? What is the good of saying a few dead words in prayer? What is the good of your writing to me, or me writing to you, if Jesus come not? And yet we sometimes have power when we think we have none; and Jesus is very near when we think him very far off. There could not be a sigh in the heart after Jesus, if the power of the Spirit were not there. It is the power of grace that makes sin a hateful, loathsome burden to the mind. It is the power of truth that makes us long for the power of truth. The carnal mind is nothing but devilish hate and spite against the truth of God; but the renewed mind thirsteth for God, for the living God, and saith, "Search me, O God, and try me, and my heart, and my thoughts; and lead me in the way everlasting!" Jesus is sometimes very near, but our eyes are holden that we cannot know him or discern him. The two disciples knew him not, but in the breaking of bread; and then he immediately vanished out of their sight.

I have been "mourning without the sun," in the midst of trouble, up to my neck many a time, and did not know that Jesus was in all till afterwards; and he truly is all in all, whether we perceive it or not. My way is very dark and trying now; as, no doubt, yours is also, with an afflicted husband and a family of children. I often think of your trying case with grief; but Jesus knows how to make good come out of afflictions to his praise.

Remember me to your dear husband and all friends.

Yours affectionately, for the Truth's Sake,
London, Dec. 27th, 1844. JAS. SHORTER.

BRETHREN.

The following verses were composed by the late Mr. Gadsby, after preaching, upon one occasion, from 2 Cor. xiii. 11: "Brethren, farewell."

BRETHREN by bonds which cannot break,
United to one Head,
Whose mercy never will forsake
A soul for whom he bled.
Chosen and made secure in Christ,
In vast eternity;
Now made to hear the Saviour's voice,
And in his praise agree.
Brethren by all that's dear to him,
By all that's dear to us;
By Jesus' blood redeem'd from sin,
Death, Moses, and the curse.
Brethren in feelings far from good,
In conflicts sharp and strong,
By faith in Jesus' precious blood
You'll sing the conqueror's song.
Joint heirs with Christ, our living Head,
Our portion is secure;
Soon shall we prove that death is dead,
And meet to part no more.
Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb,
Our Brother and our Friend,
Teach us to magnify thy name,
And on thy grace depend.
Dear Jesus, let thy presence cheer
Each soul, before we part;
And should we never more meet here,
Lord, keep us one in heart.
Farewell, we say; yet, bless the Lord,
Soon will the bless'd day come,
When all the family of God
Will safe arrive at home.
There to enjoy eternal rest,
And sing the Lamb once slain;
With bliss ineffable be bless'd,
And never part again.

W. GADSBY.

MEDITATIONS ON VARIOUS IMPORTANT POINTS OF OUR MOST HOLY FAITH.

I.

THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL.

(Continued from page 286.)

GOD has set before our eyes in his holy word a model church and a model ministry, and by so doing has displayed both his wisdom and his grace. From not seeing and from not following this inspired pattern have arisen almost all the errors and all the evils which have made havoc of both church and ministry, and perverted some of God's choicest gifts to the vilest purposes. As this point has an important bearing on our present subject, and has not met with the attention which it deserves, we will devote to it a few moments' consideration.

Without a proper pattern to instruct his eye and guide his hand, no artist, no artisan, can properly execute any work. It is not supposed that he will ever come up to his model, for that is assumed to be perfect; but it is expected that he will do his best to imitate it. If he be so ignorant as not to understand, or so conceited as not to follow the pattern set before him, he will be all his days a poor bungling workman, the plague of his employer, and the spoiler of everything put into his hand which demands skill and execution. We see, therefore, a divine pattern laid down both in the Old Testament and the New. When God said to Moses, "Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them," he added, "according to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it." (Ex. xxv. 9.) Not a pin of the tabernacle nor a vessel of service was left to the choice of Moses. Binding upon him and on the artificers employed by him was the injunction: "And look that thou make them after their pattern which was showed thee in the mount." Similarly, the Lord has given in the New Testament a perfect pattern of the ministry of the word and a perfect pattern of a gospel church. The pattern of the ministry may be found chiefly in the ministerial Epistles of Paul to Timothy and Titus; but there is no one passage where it is more clearly yet concisely laid down than in that which we have been unfolding and have not yet succeeded in finishing, viz., Eph. iv. 8-16.

The perfect pattern of a gospel church is given in 1 Cor. xii. 4-31. But we find very beautiful and concise descriptions of what the church at large is as the mystical body of Christ, Col. ii. 19, Eph. iv. 16, and v. 25-32, all which demand much prayerful attention and consideration. As one of these passages, Eph. iv. 16, is in connection with our subject—the ministry of the gospel, we shall direct special attention to it. We have shown hitherto that one of the main objects of the ministry of the gospel is the edifying or building up, as the word means, of the body of Christ. By "the body of Christ," as applicable to the church, we may understand two

things: 1, the church of Christ as a whole; (Eph. i. 22, 23; v. 29, 30;) 2, the church of Christ, as represented visibly on earth by a gospel church. (1 Cor. xii. 12, 13, 27.) The difference between these two bodies is that the one is invisible, the other visible; the one perfect, the other imperfect; one the reality, the other the representation. But from their close connection and their resemblance, the Scripture often speaks of them as one, and transfers to the visible church what is true in its fullest sense only in the invisible. Unless we see and understand this, we cannot enter into the spiritual meaning of such a chapter as 1 Cor. xii. Now, God's idea, so to speak, and we may add, intention, are that this body is to "grow into a perfect" or matured "man;" and when this is attained unto, it is "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." In the eye of him who sees all things from the beginning, the church is already complete; but it is not so in present realisation or visible manifestation. It has, therefore, to grow; and this growth has a measure or appointed standard, which is "the stature of the fulness of Christ." By turning to Eph. i. 22, 23, we shall see what this "fulness of Christ" is: "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." This fulness is not his fulness as God, (Col. ii. 9,) nor his fulness as God-man Mediator, (Col. i. 19,) but the completeness of the mystical body of which he is the Head.

The subject is somewhat difficult to understand; but as it contains much deep and precious truth, and is closely connected with the ministry, we trust that our readers will give us their attention as we attempt to unfold it.

Growth is of three kinds: 1. Growth in the whole body of Christ; 2. Growth in a church as a representation of this body; 3. Growth in each individual as a member of the body. And to each of these kinds of growth the term or limit is "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." But of course this differs according to that which has to grow. We will view it in each of these three senses.

1. View first, then, the growth of the *whole* body. The body of Christ is ever growing. In this sense "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" will only be attained when the whole body is complete, and all his mystical members glorified in eternal union with the glorified Head. But it cannot be said that this body is yet complete, except in the mind of God, for many of his elect are yet unborn, many born who are not as yet born again. As, then, each member is quickened into divine life, the body grows by the continual development and accession of these living members, which will go on until the last elect is gathered in, and the body is complete.

But now see the bearing which the ministry of the gospel has on this growth of the body of Christ. By the preached word the members of this body are quickened into spiritual life. Accessions are thus made continually to the body, for every soul quickened by the word becomes a manifested living member of Christ. What a permanent blessing is, then, couched in the ministry of the gospel, as the means appointed and owned of God to build up the body of

Christ; and in this sense every sent servant of God is a labourer together with God. (1 Cor. iii.) As, then, the ministry of the word is the appointed means of thus edifying or building up the body of Christ, it will be maintained until this body is complete, and it has attained to the appointed "measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

2. But, besides this growth of the body as a whole by the accession of successive members, there is also a growth in the visible body of Christ, as represented in a *gospel church*. Does a gospel church always remain at the same stand? Is there no difference between a newly-formed church and one that has been established for many years? It is true that when we come to examine their actual, internal condition, many old-established churches are sadly disappointing to a spiritual eye. They have lost the vigour of youth, without attaining to the wisdom and stability of age. But most churches resemble the human body in its three periods—youth, manhood, and old age. When first formed, there is usually with them a period of warmth, activity, and zeal. To this succeeds the church's best period, when its young members have become matured and ripened into steady, solid, well-established believers. And then follows the third and worst stage, when it sinks into old age and all its attendant infirmities, when it has neither the active vigour of youth nor the solid strength of manhood; but the deadness, sloth, peevishness, and fretfulness of decrepitude. Such was the Laodicean church, and such are many of our gospel churches now. Their best members, the pillars of the church, have died off; none of the younger members, taken in perhaps on a very slight experience, have succeeded to their place; peevishness and fretfulness, often issuing in strife and contention, mar all love and union; the old members are too self-willed and obstinate to heed counsel or admonition; the pastor, to whom all once looked, is removed by death, and the pulpit filled by a succession of ministers. Supplies, however, cannot have his authority or influence, and gradually the church sinks into dotage and death. Such is the history of many a gospel church, as too many can testify. The church itself, thus stricken with age, may not see its own condition, and like some old men naturally, who cannot bear the thought of old age, and still affect to be young, may stoutly resist any imputation of decline. Ephraim had grey hairs here and there upon him, yet he knew it not. (Hos. vii. 9.)

But leaving this point, let us see what is God's idea, in the word of growth in a Christian church. It is beautifully described by the apostle: "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." (Eph. iv. 15, 16.) There is also a very sweet and concise description of the same growth and by the same means in an almost parallel passage: "And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together,

increaseth with the increase of God." (Col. ii. 19.) By putting these two passages together, we may, the Lord teaching and enabling us to understand them, arrive at a right conception of growth in a Christian church. We may observe that it is dependent on two things as means and instruments of this growth; 1, the ministry of the word; 2, the mutual communion of the members with the Head and each other.

1. It is in the mystical body of Christ as in the human body. All the members are dependent on the head for life and growth, but much more in the mystical than in the natural body. Only as we are supplied out of his fulness, can there be any sensible life or manifest growth. By "holding the Head," that is, holding union and communion with the Head, "all the body, through its joints and bands, having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God;" that is, according to the will, purpose, and power of God. And as in the human body, the members grow together. Now, here comes in the benefit and blessedness of a sound and experimental gospel ministry. It feeds each several member; at least, that is what it does or should do, according to the mind of God. Now, as each is thus fed, each grows. The eye grows clearer, stronger, and more discerning; the ear becomes more fine, delicate, and discriminating; the taste more nice and yet more sound, less fond of sugar-plums, and more relishing savoury food; the hand stronger and more open and enlarged; and the foot more active and willing to run on errands of kindness and love. And as they grow together, so are they more firmly knit together. How well knit are the bones and joints of a man compared with those of a child. How compacted they become by use and exercise and advancing manhood. How strong their union, and how almost indissoluble they become.* So in the mystical body of Christ. Indissolubly united to their living Head, the members are indissolubly united to each other; and as, thus united, they minister to each other's growth and edification. The whole body is "fitly joined together," for all the members "are baptized into one body," and "all have been made to drink into one Spirit." (1 Cor. xii. 13.) God has thus mingled and tempered together the strong and the feeble, the comely and the uncomely, the honourable and the less honourable, so that each contributes to the nourishment and growth of the other. The figure of the vine and the branches may help us to understand this. The sleeping, dormant bud in the stem may represent the members of the body of Christ before divine quickening. It is in the vine, but not developed into manifest life and growth. But at a certain period a power is put forth, which may be called manifest life; (for the bud in nature never was really dead;) sap flows into it from the stem; it shoots, it grows, it blooms, it bears. Nor is it alone in life growth and fruitfulness. Its fellow-buds grow with it into fellow-

* When Ravaillac, the assassin of Henri IV., was, according to his sentence, to be torn to pieces by four horses, one at each arm and leg, they could not, after several attempts, pull the limbs out of the body until the surgeon cut the ligaments of the joints with a knife.

branches, and the life of the one keeps pace with the life and growth of the other. So in the mystical body of Christ. The members grow together. The strong arm has a fellow in the strong leg, and the health and strength of each member are the health and strength of all. As this growth is being carried on, there is a "growing up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ;" for it is out of his fulness and the supplies of his grace that all this growth comes.

But there is also a growth of the whole body by the union and communion of the members with each other. This is beautifully opened up by the apostle: "From whom the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." (Eph. iv. 16.) Each member contributes to the welfare and benefit of the other. The eye does not see for itself, nor the ear hear for itself, nor the hand minister to itself, nor the foot walk for itself, but each individual member acts for the benefit of the others and the whole. We cannot enlarge on this subject, but it is set before us as God's pattern of a gospel church. But now observe its connection with the ministry of the gospel. The ministry feeds and strengthens each individual member. As then each member is thus fed and strengthened, it feeds and strengthens its fellow members. The whole body is first "fitly joined together;" it then becomes "compacted," that is, firmly knit and strengthened, "by that which every joint supplieth; and by the effectual working in the measure of every part, the whole body edifies itself in love."

To open this subject, to explain how the members mutually contribute to each other's nourishment and growth, would not only take up too much space, but would divert us from the more immediate consideration of our subject. But it may easily be seen how the ministry of the gospel contributes to the mutual growth of the members. When, for instance, there is an addition to the church, and the candidates can speak of their being called or blessed under the ministry of the word, and give in a clear and sweet testimony to the work of grace on their soul, does not this kindle new life and feeling in the hearts of the members of the church? Or when any one member is signally favoured and blessed, he does not eat his morsel alone; he is glad to communicate to others and share with them the blessing of God which has made him rich; and how this will often revive a drooping soul, and if it do no more, will draw forth prayer and desire for a similar blessing. Nay, if it even work jealousy, it does not work amiss, for these coals of fire which hath a most vehement flame will often stir up the languid soul, and draw forth the wrestling cry, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." O what a blessing there is in a real, gracious, savoury, experimental ministry. How a church flourishes under it, as member after member is by it edified and fed. How it promotes union and brotherly love; and as these are promoted, how the church edifies or builds itself up in love. But where there is a cold, barren, life-

less ministry, under it church and congregation sink into a dead, listless, lethargic state. No union or communion is felt among the members; they care little for each other's welfare, naturally or spiritually; they just meet, out of formality, on the Lord's day, and whilst a few poor, tried souls are secretly sighing and mourning their own carnal state and the dead state of the church generally, the talkative professors have it all their own way, insensible of their own death, and the death in the pulpit and pew; and strife and division, perhaps on the merest trifles, soon rend the already disunited members asunder.

3. We see, then, the connection between the ministry of the gospel and the growth and edification of the church as the body of Christ. And what is true of the church collectively is true of *each member* separately. The ministry of the word is God's appointed means to instruct, feed, and edify every member of the mystical body of Christ. Much, indeed, of this instruction and edification is conveyed so gradually as to be almost insensible. We are on the look out for great signal blessings, and, indeed, we are right in so doing; but we should bear in mind that it is with the soul often as the body. The food that we daily take feeds and nourishes our frames, and yet we are not always sensible of the benefit thus derived from it. So, in sitting under a sound, gracious, experimental ministry, there is a being fed and nourished by the word of life, as distinct from special seasons of signal blessing, which are rare events, though so highly prized when they do come. Perhaps at your first deliverance, or afterwards, under some special trial, deep affliction, or powerful temptation, you were signally favoured under a sermon; but how rare these seasons are, and what bright spots do they form in a believer's experience. But distinct from these special and rare seasons there is a feeding under the word, a revival of faith and hope and love, a being renewed in the spirit of the mind. Sometimes instruction is communicated by it to inform and establish the judgment; sometimes a light is cast on a dark path in providence or grace, to show us that the Lord is with us in it; sometimes our evidences are brightened, and doubts and fears dispelled; sometimes temptations, which we have thought peculiar to ourselves, have been so touched on that we see the servant of God is tempted as we are; sometimes we get such views and discoveries of the blessed Lord, as he is set forth in his Person and work, as draw forth faith upon him and love towards him, and he is felt to be near, dear, and precious; sometimes we can so travel almost step by step with the minister as to fully believe we are in the footsteps of the flock; and as he opens up and proves, point after point, by the word of truth, the work of grace in the heart is so shone upon by the blessed Spirit that we have no doubt of its genuineness and reality. Sometimes, again, our cold, sluggish, dead, and backward hearts are stirred up to take fresh hold of the mercy of God in Christ, of the faithfulness of a covenant God, of the fulness and freeness of rich, free, and superabounding grace; and as faith embraces these divine realities, the soul is melted and softened into contrition, humility, and love.

Sometimes the fear of God is sensibly strengthened, the evil of sin more clearly seen and felt; prayers and desires are kindled to be kept from it, that it may not grieve us, and sorrow of heart experienced, with many inward confessions on account of past backslidings. Sometimes peculiar strength is communicated under a special trial, resignation given to the will of God, the rod submitted to and embraced, and the mercy acknowledged that he does not leave us to go into evil unchecked, without repenting of or forsaking it. Sometimes keen reproof enters the soul; we see that we have been entangled in a snare of Satan; we may almost fear the wound is incurable; but blood and love form a balm that well suits the bleeding conscience. Sometimes we are led to see how worldly, covetous, and carnally-minded we have been; how carking cares and business anxieties have, like locusts, eaten up every green thing, and how little we have really thought of, or done for the Lord during the week. The contrast between all this worldly din and dust, and the calm, still, spiritual services and worship of the sanctuary, strikes the mind; and whilst it conveys secret reproof to the conscience, yet, mingled with it, there springs up an earnest longing for deliverance from the pressure of the body of sin and death, and for more enjoyment of that sweet spirituality of mind which we know is life and peace.

But now, in order to see how all this nutritious food, communicated to the soul by the ministry of the word, is connected with not only the growth of the individual members of the body, but how, by joints and bands, the nourishment is ministered, view the effects, such as we have just described, in connection with our fellow members. Love to the Lord produces love to his people; union and communion with him create and cement union and communion with those who are manifestly his. As, then, one or another testifies to a blessing received under the word, there is a spreading of the blessing, a diffusion of the warmth, a running down of the precious ointment upon the head and beard, down to the skirts of the garments. Heart becomes more closely and firmly knitted to heart, and soul to soul; and as the joints and bands are thus more compacted together, the nourishment flows more fully into them, and through them becomes diffused over the body. In every church there will be stiff joints, crooked fingers, lame legs, tender feet, rheumatic shoulders and limbs, which, if not actually paralysed, are full of old chronic complaints; and these are almost out of the reach of the nourishment spoken of, are little themselves benefited by it, and therefore cannot spread it on. But, in describing the mode in which the body has nourishment ministered by joints and bands, we are no more bound to set it all aside, or doubt and deny it on account of these crooked joints, than a lecturer on anatomy, in describing the human frame, is obliged to explain diseased structures or crippled limbs in the natural body. We do what the Scripture does—describe the body as it *should be*, not what it often *is*; we draw after God's model, not after man's; and for this simple reason, that God's pattern is inspired and perfect, but man's a perverted and base imitation. All who have known and felt spiritual blessings, and have

witnessed their effect upon the healthy members of a church, will bear witness to the truth of our description; and any exceptional case of a crooked or half-paralysed member which neither receives nor communicates nourishment no more nullifies or impairs the accuracy of our statement than a diseased or defective joint in the human body sets aside a true representation of the natural frame. How blessed it is when the ministry of the word is thus owned of God, and answers the end of its divine institution. There is now no room for strife and contention, petty jealousies, evil surmises, unjust suspicions, cold looks, averted eyes, cutting expressions, harsh speeches to the face or behind the back, dwelling on past grievances, raking up buried complaints, and rubbing up old sores. The spirit now is that of love and union, humility, meekness, gentleness, and quietness; strife and division are shunned and abhorred by the soul thus favoured and blessed; it would do anything or suffer anything rather than pain the feelings, grieve the mind, or wound the conscience of the dear children of God. This is, if we may use the expression, God's idea of the ministry, and of the way in which it ministers nourishment to the members of the mystical body of Christ. He has set a pattern before our eyes, that we may know what his mind and will are. But this cuts both ways. As you read what we have thus feebly and imperfectly traced out, a secret sigh springs up in your breast. "I wish that our minister fed our souls as you describe; I wish that our church was as flourishing, as fruitful, as united, as loving, as mutually ministering to each other's comfort and profit as you have drawn. But it is not so with us. We are rather starved than fed; and the members of the church, or at least some of them, instead of ministering to each other's comfort, seem more ready to tear each other to pieces." Your complaint may or may not be just as regards your particular instance. The ministry may feed others, if it do not feed you; and you may yourself be one of those unpleasant, quarrelsome, disaffected members whose words and actions rather foment than allay strife. But this is a point on which we cannot now enter. We shall, therefore, conclude our present paper with the expression of our belief that nearly all who fear God and have a right judgment in these matters will admit that Zion is low, in a low place, and will join with us in the expression of our desire and prayer that the Lord would graciously revive his work, and in justly deserved wrath would remember mercy.

WHAT unthankfulness is it to forget our consolations, and to look upon matters of grievance; to think so much upon two or three crosses as to forget a hundred blessings.—*Sibbes*.

INGORS of gold are prized by some,
 Who travel far to bring gold home;
 But words of grace from Jesu's lips
 I value more than treasure ships.
 The kisses of his mouth to me
 Are passing sweet, and come so free.
 O that he would more often speak,
 And come my heart with love to break.—*A. H.*

Obituary.

THOMAS HOOPER.

Died at Melbourne, Australia, on June 3, 1866, THOMAS HOOPER, aged about 73 years.

He was one with whom my soul had sweet communion, at times, for more than 35 years. He was a man much tried in circumstances, and for more than 20 years had a poor afflicted body; but was often much blessed in his soul, and many sweet times we have had together both in Bristol and in this country, for we have many times wept together as fellow-heirs of the grace of life. He was one who could give a clear account of his call by divine grace. I first got acquainted with him about 1830, and the union then formed was never broken, no, not in death. We both used to hear the late Mr. Symons and Nathaniel Mariner.

He was arrested and brought to cry for mercy as a poor condemned criminal when living at Cirencester, in the following manner. He was sitting one evening outside the door, when, on a sudden, death in all its horrors appeared ready to cut him down as a cumberer of the ground. He ran inside the house to flee, and fainted away. He then began, and went on, making vows of reformation and working for life, but said nothing to any mortal being on what he felt or feared. The family in which he then lived as servant, then moved to Bristol, where he went to church, and heard a Mr. Day, in St. Philip's. Here he worked hard for life, and tried to weave a garment in which he could wrap up his guilty soul; but, alas, he found the bed shorter than that he could stretch himself on it, and the covering narrower than that he could wrap himself in it. Under the weight of this he sank very low indeed, and none but the Lord knows what he passed through for a long time, on the brink of black despair, under the terrors of the law; and being small of stature, he was tried much by that word, "A dwarf shall not come nigh." (Lev. xxi. 20, 21.) He carried a rope for some time to destroy himself, but he was preserved from making use of it. He sank so low at last that he was not able to carry on his services as a footman, and was considered by his master and the servants as out of his mind. He was the first to rebuke sin where he saw it in the house; and if the bell rang, and anyone called to see the master, he could not go and say, as he had been taught, "Mr. G. is not in." This brought him into a deal of trouble, for the master told him he must do as he had told him, or he must leave. The next time the bell rang, poor Tom went to the master, "What shall I say, Sir?" "Why, say as I tell you; say I am not in." He then went to the door. "What do you want, Sir?" "I wish to see Mr. G." "Mr. G. told me to say he was not in, Sir." Mr. G. overheard him, called him upstairs, and put him down to be mad. The master and servants taunting him, the keen arrows of divine justice sticking fast in his conscience, the hopelessness of ever finding mercy, all combined together to lead him to feel he was like Cain, a vagabond on

the earth. He then made up his mind to leave England, and go to the Indies, where no one knew him, and where he would never mention the name of God, profess religion, or go to hear the word of life. He has often told me since that he could see the flaming sword and the eye of justice and death following him, go where he would. Indeed, he was brought so low, that he could not eat or sleep, and was afraid to go anywhere in the dark; so that when he went to bed, he would shut himself up under the clothes and have a candle burning, fearing that the powers of darkness would fetch him bodily away. At last he came to a determination never to read the word, nor go inside of a place of worship after the following Sabbath. But the master sent him to get a fillet of veal, and through confusion of mind he bought, I think, a leg of beef. When he discovered his mistake, he took it to some poor woman, and went and bought the fillet out of his own pocket. Every step that he now took was on the very brink of hell; but as he was going up Park Street one day, the dear Redeemer seemed to appear to him in open vision. Indeed, he appeared to him as if in the sufferings of the God-man Mediator. In his view he seemed to bear

“All that incarnate God could bear,
With strength enough and none to spare.”

He has told me, when he saw by faith the spear enter, he felt a pain in his own side. So wondrous was the sight, that he seemed for a moment afraid to move. But here his heart broke all to pieces, and he wept like a child; and when he got home, he could hardly speak. He was then sent with a note to Mareidan Place. There he had another glorious view of the dear Redeemer suffering in his room and stead; and there he felt the ponderous weight which had sunk him for years gone in a moment. He leapt for joy, and his face, that was before the very image of black despair, now so shone that all in the house saw the change. That night he went to bed, and put out the candle; but the very room seemed to be filled with glory. In fact, he said, he saw the glory of Christ, and that he was then baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. No sleep had he that night, but so full was his soul of love and joy that he was bathed in perspiration, and for nearly a week or more he ate hardly a bit, for he was feeding by faith on the Paschal Lamb.

About this time he was led to hear that dear man of God, Mr. Symons. He was then in his court robes. About this time the poor fading leaf, now writing, first found him out. He was blessed much under Mr. Symons's ministry, and in the same place other ministers were sealed on his heart. He was at this time highly favoured in soul, but much tried in body and circumstances; even so as to know what it was to be stripped of all, even the bed from under him, and then to be cast into prison. I have often felt it an honour to help one of the precious jewels of heaven. When I left England for Australia, I left my brother behind. But he was much on my mind, and when the Lord enabled me, I sent for him to come out to this country. He arrived here in 1855. The friends were very kind to him, and some of them continued so up to his death.

About five years ago, he became so infirm that it was thought best to get him into the Benevolent Asylum, as there he would be watched over and kept clean. He preferred this rather than be a burden to me, as he was afraid he would; and I have seen the hand of God in this, for the Lord used him as the instrument of the conversion of two if not three in that place, of whom one is gone home some time in all the joy of a gospel conqueror, and another is now longing to go. And O what a lovely sight to behold. There are about 500 inmates, and only three or four that we know of Zion's children. We visited him, and supplied him with what he stood in need of. As he was not able to come out, these three or four used to meet and speak often one to another, and read the word of God together, as they could seldom hear anything inside. Tom has been longing to go home, and often said to me, he hoped, if it were the Lord's will, that he might die suddenly. He was in the yard, leaning on the carriage of a poor cripple, one of the three, repeating that hymn,

" Give me the wings of faith to rise
Within the veil and see,
The saints above, how great their joys,
How bright their glories be;"

when he fell into a sort of fainting fit. This was Friday. On the Sabbath he was a little better, but on Monday worse. On the Wednesday, I was just come from our evening prayer meeting, when I was sent for by another friend. We got there about ten o'clock, and stopped till four. He knew me, and was glad to see me, and found the everlasting arms of God underneath him in the swellings of Jordan. He was in a blessed frame of soul; told me that he was in the Lord's hands; and said, "If you write home any testimony, don't say much;" but he added, "You know all about me." He spoke of the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of all things, and repeated several hymns, such as:

" Up to the field where angels lie ;"

and

" A man there is, a real man,
With wounds still gaping wide."

and

" Blessed are they whose guilt is gone,
Whose sins are wash'd away with blood;
Whose hope is fix'd on Christ alone,
Whom Christ has reconciled to God."

Sometimes I could hardly catch the words, as he could hardly speak audibly; but he was much in inward prayer and praise. I put my ear close to his mouth, and I could catch now and then, "Glory," or some such word. He then wished us to go home, for he said, "You can do me no good; I am in the Lord's hands." I then kissed him, and left him, as I thought he might live some days, leaving word if he were taken worse that they would send for me or for my friend. My sister Jane saw him on Friday. He was most blessed in his soul, and sent his love to me. One of the three above saw him on Saturday evening at ten o'clock. The nurse who was with him said the

last words he was heard to say were, "I am quite happy, going to my sweet Jesus." He died about 11 o'clock, Sabbath, June 3rd, 1866. On the Monday I begged his body, got a coffin, and a tomb in the Baptist Burying Ground, where we interred him, and sang that blessed hymn,

"What solemn tidings reach my ears;
How awful and how grand," &c.;

read a part of the word, engaged in prayer, and sang his favourite verse:

"Blessed are they whose guilt is gone."

To me it was a most solemn scene, as I feel a poor fading leaf, and after 35 years' union and the secret sweets that we have known and had together, that I should be called upon to lay him in the tomb. On the Sabbath evening I spake as the Lord enabled me of his life and death on these words: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." That "we" my soul felt worth a thousand worlds. The nurse said she never saw such a death-bed before. May the Lord bless this testimony of his dying saint to the encouragement of some that are lingering on the brink, and fear to cross the gloomy sea. He had been waiting a long time on the brink, as it were, anxiously looking for the summons to come over, and when it came he was ready; he could say:

"On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,
And cast a wishful eye
To Canaan's bright and happy land,
Where my possessions lie."

I have written this, as the death of the righteous has often gladdened his and my heart, and I hope you will be able to make it out, and curtail it as you see for the best, as I have written it as it flowed into my mind. O what a blessed meeting it will be when all the sheep are gathered home. May the Lord bless you in body, soul, and spirit. This is the desire of a fading leaf,

Collingwood, Melbourne, Australia.

T. DAVIS.

WHEN the Lord speaks by his Spirit to a man, selecting and calling him out of the lost world, he can no more disobey than Abraham did, when the Lord spoke to him after an extraordinary manner, to depart from his own country and kindred. Abraham departed as the Lord had spoken to him. There is a secret, but very powerful virtue in a word, or look, or touch of the Spirit upon the soul, by which it is forced, not with a harsh, but a pleasing violence, and cannot but follow it, not unlike that of Elijah's mantle upon Elisha. How easily did the disciples forsake their callings and their dwellings to follow Christ.—*Leighton.*

No sooner is Jesus, by the eternal agency of his Spirit, revealed in our hearts, and his completely-finished obedience discovered to the eye of faith, than we cease going about to establish our own righteousness, and joyfully submit to the imputed righteousness of the incarnate God. Self-excellence and self-dependence vanish in that blessed moment; and the language of the soul is, "Thy merits, O thou Redeemer of the lost, are all my salvation, and an interest in thee is all my desire."—*Toplady.*

NOVEMBER 1, 1866.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

NOVEMBER, 1866.

MATT. V. 6; 2 TIM. I. 9; ROM. XI. 7; ACTS VIII. 37, 38; MATT. XXVIII. 19.

THE DEALINGS OF GOD WITH MY SOUL.

BY ONE WHO HAS LOST HIS NATURAL EYES, BUT FOUND SPIRITUAL ONES.

(Concluded from page 305.)

I once had a dream. I dreamt that I saw Jesus Christ. I felt my doubts and fears. I began to long and pant after him. Then he turned his head and looked at me, and all my doubts and fears fled, and I was filled with joy and peace. Then he turned his eyes from me again. Then I began to doubt and fear and long after him as before, and he looked upon me again. Thus he did three times. Then I awoke with a sweet calm upon my spirit. I began to think upon my dream, and I thought it was a prelude to a future seeing of Jesus by faith as crucified for me.

Some time after this, one morning when I awoke, feeling the wrath of God and the guilt of sin heavy upon my conscience, fearing after all I should not be pardoned, but feeling the spirit of prayer strongly upon me, I rose up, and when I had put my clothes on I kneeled down in my usual manner to pray; and the blessed Spirit so filled my mouth with arguments and brought such sweet promises to my mind with such power that quite astonished me; such sweet promises as these: "He that confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy;" "He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance;" "He came to seek and to save those that are lost;" "They shall find me if they seek me with their whole heart;" and many more such sweet promises. When I had been praying thus a little while, I saw with the eyes of my mind a cloud break, and I saw the Lord Jesus in all his sufferings on the tree. My heart began to melt, and he appeared to come nearer to me, and I said, "Lord, is this for me?" and these words came with power: "Thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck. Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me." Such love flowed into my heart from a dear Saviour, I felt such a love to him, and I received his precious blood into my conscience by faith, as removed all the burden of sin and the wrath of God. I never before had such a sight of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. All my doubts and fears and bondage were gone, and I felt such sweet peace in my conscience that I was filled with joy. The dear Lord so en-

deared himself to me, it dissolved my heart. I could then believe in him as my Saviour and Redeemer. I was then enabled to put my trust in him for all I needed, both temporal and spiritual. I then knew what true repentance was. It flowed out under a sense of Christ's dying love to my soul. It is the goodness of God that leads to repentance, and I was forced to cry out, "Abba, Father. My Lord and my God!" I went down stairs and said I was sure I should go to heaven, for I had got my dear Saviour in my heart. O the love, joy, and peace that I experienced! I cannot express it. Although I was a poor blind creature, I felt myself the happiest man in the world. When I heard the Scriptures read, I was enabled to appropriate them to myself, and receive the precious promises into my heart.

A sense of this sweet vision abode a long time with me. I cannot remember how long my mind was so taken up with the love of God to me, the unworthiest of all creatures. Shall the wonders God hath wrought be lost in silence and forgot?

A little time after this, you came to Newark to preach, and there was a way made for me to go. This was the first time I went to Newark. After I was blind, I had a great desire to hear you, to examine myself by your preaching, as I viewed you as God's servant. I begged of God to search me and try me, and if I was not right to make me right. I thought I would expose my conscience to all that you said. When I got into the chapel, I felt very comfortable. The singing was very sweet to me, and your prayer dropped as the rain and distilled as the dew upon my soul. I enjoyed all you said. Your text was: "Stand up, and bless the Lord your God for ever and ever. And blessed be thy glorious name which is exalted above all blessing and praise." You preached my experience, and I went with you till you came to my deliverance. You said the burden of sin did not always go from the conscience all at once, but by little and little, until it was all gone by an application of the blood of sprinkling. You said that when the burden of sin was gone from the conscience, it was blotted out of the book of God's remembrance; as it is written, "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins. Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee." These words came with such power to my heart, such love flowed into my heart from a dear Saviour, and such love flowed out of my heart to the dear Lord Jesus and to you, that I am not able to express. "O!" thought I, "what an honour I am come to! My sins are not only purged from my conscience by the blood of Christ, but they are blotted out of God's debt book." O the joy that flowed into my heart! I had enough to do to keep my seat. Surely this was coming to Mount Zion, the city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem. It was the very house of God and the gate of heaven to my soul.

When we came out of the place, I felt a desire to turn into the vestry, to tell you what God had done for my soul; but I did not. I am quite sure it is true what I have heard you say, that the love of God shed abroad in the heart will give submission to the will of

God in the meanest situation; for I felt quite submissive to the will of God in his dispensations towards me. Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I desire to keep thy word. I then knew the sweetness of true religion. I felt such pleasure in going to the house of God, I could say, "It is good for me to be here." I then enjoyed in my heart all that Mr. P. prayed for. I was so happy I envied none. I thought I should enjoy my dear Saviour all the way to heaven, never expecting to feel the evils of my corrupt nature any more; but, alas! My comfort and joy soon began to abate. One morning, when I awoke, my dear Saviour was gone, and I felt the evils of my heart, the corruptions of my nature, and many vile wicked thoughts. It was suggested to my mind that I had offended my Saviour, and that he would never more come to me. This filled me with great trouble and grief at the thought of parting with my dear Saviour, whom I so dearly loved, and who had so loved me. My heart was ready to break with sorrow; but in a few days these words came to my mind with much power and sweetness: "Can a mother forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget, yet will I not forget thee. I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands. Thy walls are continually before me." This filled my heart with joy and peace, and I enjoyed my dear Saviour again. This showed me that he would never forget one whom he once loved.

I long had a desire to tell Mr. P. my experience, but was a long time before I did; but it happened that we met together at a friend's house to take tea, and I was enabled to tell them a little of the dealings of the Lord with me; but I had a poor gift to talk.

Soon after this, one morning, when I awoke, it came to my mind, "You are not right yet. I can convince you by this scripture: 'The tongue of the stammerer shall speak plainly,' and you can not;" but I heard Mr. Huntington's sermon read, "The Loss and Restoration of the Image of God in Man," which comforted me very much, and delivered me from that temptation. He says, "And now for the comfort and establishment of the weak. When the Spirit cries, 'Abba, Father; my Lord and my God,' in the soul, then the tongue of the stammerer speaks plainly."

I will now tell you how the Lord made a way for me to learn to read the word of God with my finger, when I had been blind about five years.

My dear mother was taken ill with palpitation of the heart. We sent for the doctor, who knew her complaint, but his medicine afforded her no relief. She got so bad, her heart beat so hard, that she could not sleep, and we thought she could not live long in that state. I prayed to the Lord to direct us what to do, and my aunt came over to tell us that there was a man at her village who had the same complaint, and Dr. Davidson, of Nottingham, had done him a deal of good; and my friend P. said he would lend us his horse and cart to take her if she was fit to go; but she was not able; so Mr. P. sent a note for him to come over, and he came that same day. When he came to my mother, I went to the bed, and I begged of

the Lord to direct him what to write, that he might give his blessing with the medicine, if it were his gracious will; and it began to do her good as soon as she had taken it. She recovered a great deal. Though it has not removed the complaint, it gives her ease when the palpitation comes on, and she always keeps the medicine by her. Before the physician went out of the house, he asked me if I should like to learn to read. I said I should, but I thought it impossible for me to read. He said he would send me some books, and he sent me an easy lesson book. So I began to try to read, but I could make nothing of it. I had a great desire to learn. My heart went up to God, begging of him to teach me to read. I tried about two days, and I then thought I must give it up, as I could not learn; but I prayed to the Lord that as he had given this gift to other blind people he would teach me to read his blessed word if it was his gracious will. So I began to try again, and, with the assistance of my mother and sister, and the blessing of God, I soon began to read, and in a few weeks I could read the Epistle to the Philippians, which the doctor had sent with the lesson book. I felt much gratitude to Almighty God for this blessing, and felt much joy in reading his word. My father saw the gentleman again and told him I had learnt to read. He was very glad, and sent me another book, the Gospel by John. This was a sweet book to me. O the joy that I felt when reading this blessed book! The word came with such power to my heart; and when I came to the words where Thomas said, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God;" this brought my past experience to my mind, and I felt much love and contrition. My heart was filled with joy. I thought I was just like Thomas, for I could say, "My Lord and my God." I have now also got Matthew and Luke to read. Thus, by my mother's affliction, the Lord has given me this great blessing.

Your preaching has many times been blessed to me, and I have blessed God for sending you. I once heard you preach from these words: "Again I will build you, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel. Thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry." This was very much blessed to me. Many times, when I have been under desertions, and very miserable, your preaching has been much blessed to me, and I have been set to rights again.

I have been under many temptations, and had many days of spiritual darkness. Many times has the adversary tried to dispute me out of my sonship. At times he has suggested to my mind that it was not real. How could I remember so long since? Yea, many times has he tried to strip me of my evidences, and to get the atonement from me; but I could not part with this precious blood applied to my conscience. I have been in such trouble at times and such

darkness of soul, I thought there was not one scripture that I could receive comfort from. Then this text came to my mind: "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 trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God." Then I have been enabled to trust in him until he has shone upon me again; and when faith is in exercise I can say, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord."

On the Sunday night before last Christmas day had the following dream. I dreamt that you were administering the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and I was there; but I thought you would not bring it to me, as I had never spoken to you in my life. I thought you knew nothing about my experience; but you brought it to me, and I felt such brokenness of heart, such mourning over my crucified Saviour, that it awoke me. I fell asleep again and dreamt the same again; and, feeling brokenness of heart as before, I awoke and began to think about it, and I remembered when you were preaching once you said there was a deal to be had at the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. After this, when I was reading in Luke, when I came to the verse about Zacharias and his wife, that they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless, I felt a reproof; and when I came to read about the man full of leprosy, whom Jesus Christ healed, I thought I was spiritually healed and I had never told you of it; and these words, "Do this in remembrance of me," and these, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," I felt a reproof, for I desire to love and fear God all the days of my life. I told Mr. P. that I had a desire to join the church, for I had long joined them in heart and affection, and he said I had better speak to you when you came to Bottesford; and when you came he mentioned it to you, and you said I had better let it be until you came again. After this I was very much harassed by Satan. I feared that I could not stand before you; and it came to my mind that I had grieved the Holy Spirit because I had not told you before now of my experience. I was very much cast down and I wept very much that ever I should grieve the ever-blessed Spirit, by whom all my comforts came. When I went to pray, I begged for forgiveness, but I could get no answer. I was so distressed that it made me feel quite low and ill. My usual times of bending my knees would not do. I kept going to pray to God several times a day, for I could not rest. I heard some of Bunyan's writings read at the meeting, which comforted me a little; one discourse in particular from these words: "If we sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;" but I could not rest without a fresh sense of his love to my soul. I felt so low with grief and loss of appetite I was ready to sink away. One day, as I was reading these words: "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven," I felt so distressed I thought when Sunday came I would ask Mr. P. to pray for me; but before Sunday came, as I was weeping at the thought of grieving the ever-blessed Spirit, these

words came to my mind: "He will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing." This abated my grief, and when I was in bed, these words came to my mind with much power and sweetness: "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." These words comforted me very much. I was enabled to receive them for myself and I begged forgiveness. O that I may never more grieve but ever cherish the ever-to-be-adored Spirit.

A few weeks ago Mr. P. told me I had better write to you, and I dare not do otherwise. So I have told you, Sir, as well as I have been enabled, of the dealings of God with me. I do not expect that I shall be able to go to Leicester, it being so far distant; but I must tell you, and then I desire to be submissive to the will of God, as it is he that fixes the bounds of my habitation.

The Lord bless you and stand by you and crown your labours more and more. Although you are an old man, may you be spared a little longer amongst us, if it be his blessed will. So if you consider me a chosen vessel, be so kind as to send me an answer.

My father and mother join me in love to you.

I remain, Your unworthy Servant,

Thornton, Oct. 16th, 1850.

T. H.

P.S.—My sister Mary wrote the above down from my lips.

[We personally knew the writer of the above letter, which was written by him to the late Mr. Chamberlain, of Leicester.—E.D.]

NOTES OF A SERMON

BY THE LATE MR. MARTIN, OF STEVENAGE.

"For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death."—Ps. xlviii. 14.

THIS is the greatest privilege, the greatest mercy, the greatest blessing, that a poor sinner on this side of eternity can be favoured with under the blessed anointings, teachings, and leadings of God the Holy Ghost; to lay claim to this, I say, is the greatest blessing that a man or woman can be favoured with. Suppose we had thousands of gold, or all the world, what would this be? My fellow sinner, I am not speaking against money. It is all very good in its place. But suppose we had it, and set our heart upon it, of what avail will it be? We are only to dwell here for a time. The psalmist says, "Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth, and mine age is as nothing before thee. Verily man, in his best estate, is altogether vanity." We are no sooner born into this world than we begin to die. Our lives are nothing but a dying life all the way through. If we have our portion in this life, and have not the God of Jacob for our refuge, it would have been better for us if we had never been born; it would have been better for us if we had been a dog, rather than to live and die destitute of the God of Jacob.

The Lord Jesus Christ, in the days of his flesh upon earth, had no riches. He says, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."

There are many of God's children in this world whose bodies are the temples of the living God, yet who are destitute, afflicted, tormented, with hardly a bed to lay their poor bodies upon,—poor beggars, who are brought from the dust and from the dunghill, yet will praise a Triune God as long as eternity rolls round.

These words are uppermost in my affections, and will be as long as God gives me breath. This is a portion which God brought to me when I was in the act of praising his precious name for a temporal deliverance. If I had a thousand tongues they should all be employed in praising God for delivering such a wretch. Here I saw him not only a God of providence but a God of grace. I told him that I could trust soul and body into his hands. I told him I believed he was my God. But I have doubted it several times since. Say you, "Have you been so foolish?" Yes, I have. I never shall forget the frame I was in. The sweetness may be lost, but I cannot forget the time nor the place. This is the greatest blessing that we can be blessed with in time and eternity.

I shall speak a little of what this God does for his children; for he is a *kind* God. There is not one in the presence of God who has not sinned. None of us can pay a farthing to a just God. We are all brought into condemnation. God might have damned all the human race from the first man to the last that will have an existence. But, bless his precious name, he made a way through his only-begotten Son, whereby he magnified the law and made it honourable, satisfied divine justice for his church and people. He found out a way whereby poor sinners can be saved from the wrath to come. Dr. Young says a God all mercy is a God unjust; and Dr. Watts says:

"Nor dares a creature guess
Which of the glories brightest shine,
The justice or the grace."

God will never save a poor soul at the expense of his justice. His justice is as dear to him as his grace. This is a blessed, a glorious attribute, which cannot be tarnished. Therefore, if we cannot get a surety, we must suffer. Just look at the case of a poor man in debt. The creditor comes and sends him to prison. He has not got a single farthing. He must lie in prison till he gets somebody to pay his debt. But just as he gets to the prison door, a friend says to the officer, "What are you going to do with this man?" "Why, to put him in prison," says he. "O no, you must not do that," replies the friend. So he pays his debt, and then the debtor is made a free man. Thus it is with the church of Christ. Christ has given full satisfaction, and Justice cannot demand a farthing more. Christ has saved his church with an everlasting salvation; they shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end. He is a just God and a Saviour, and thus he brings them from the kingdom of Satan, from the world, and from their own sports and pastimes. They come from the kingdom of darkness, and he brings them into the kingdom of grace; and will be their God through time and eternity. He will have the purchase of his blood and the triumph of his victories, in spite of death, hell, and the grave. Whe-

ther the man is a black man or a white man, when the appointed moment comes, he says to him, "Hitherto shalt thou go, but no further." It does not matter what his transgressions may have been; it does not matter how black he has been; this is the way that the Lord stops him. He does not stop them all alike. When he stopped good Mr. Perkins, he was reproved by John Bunyan. Now, you know that John Bunyan, in his unconverted state, was such a character that he spoiled all the youths in the town; and Perkins thought, "What sort of a wretch must I be, if such a wretch as that is able to reprove me?" We cannot chalk out a path for the Almighty to walk by. Some he calls one way and some another. It is all his work from first to last. The poor sinner never works out till God works in; and when God works in a poor sinner a sense of his lost state and condition, he works it out in sighs, groans, and supplications. Thus Christ will have the purchase of his blood. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost;" and if that be the case, the mercy of God is the source from whence it comes to a poor guilty sinner, although he may not have run into such outward acts of sin as some do. Every pain in this body springs from sin; and can such a filthy stream, which issues from such a filthy fountain be otherwise than abhorred by that God who is of purer eyes than to behold evil? Blessed be his dear name, there is a way whereby a poor rooted-up sinner can approach God. He has not a single good thing of his own to plead; but he has Christ's blood and righteousness to plead. He is a merciful God and a compassionate God.

"For this God is our God." Says one, "I fear he is not *my* God. I fear I have no share in his mercy. I fear I have no share in his blood." This is thy feeling, poor child of God. Though he has planted eternal life in thy never-dying soul, yet thou fearest that he is not thy God. He would never have turned the devil out of thy wicked and deceitful heart if he were not thy God. He *has* turned him out, and now thou art a poor wretched broken-hearted sinner, a poor weeping sinner, a poor longing sinner. He has brought thee to his footstool, to say, with the publican, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." He has brought thee to see that it was sin that nailed the Redeemer to the accursed tree. It was sin that caused him to cry out in bitterest agony, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It was sin that caused him to sweat great drops of blood through his innocent soul. It was sin that made him cry, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done." Then, I say, he hath shown thee that sin is an abominable thing; and if he has done anything for thee, he will make thee flee from it as from the face of a serpent. Man in his natural state is nothing but an incarnate devil. Thus he teaches his people the heinousness of sin, and to say with Jabez, "O that thou wouldest bless me indeed, that thou wouldest enlarge my coast, that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me." Thus sin is the grief of your souls; and thus the Lord teaches his people these things.

This God is a *merciful* God, a *wonder-working* God. His name is called, "Wonderful, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace." His love is a wonderful love. It has washed clean the blackest of characters that ever had an existence,—Saul, Manasseh, Magdalene, and not only they, but thousands of poor sinners. He is a *wonderful* God. His love is wonderful, his compassion is wonderful. If it were not wonderful, he would never have put up with me as he has done. It is a love which *passeth knowledge*, a love which angels cannot sing of as you can. They cannot sing of blood; but thou canst sing of blood which has cleansed the foulest soul. Thou canst sing of love that calls poor sinners from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son, and for which thou shalt praise his name as long as eternity lasts.

He is a wonder-working God in *providence*. I was reading, the other day, of a poor man that owed a debt, and he daily expected the officer to come to seize upon his goods, for he had not a farthing to pay. Every step he heard he thought it was the officer, and no money to pay. Here was the man in a dreadful state. His eyes were red with weeping. At last a little bird flew into the cupboard. The man went and shut the door and caught the bird. By and bye he fancied he heard the bird begin to sing:

"It shall be well when darkness reigns."

Hearing the bird sing thus, as he thought, it appeared rather singular. Soon afterwards he heard some one open the door. It was a man, who said, "Have you got a bird here? That is my mistress's bird. Here is a trifle for you;" and that was just the sum the poor man owed. Poor sinner, see how God can work when everything seems shut up. The spring is not dry. Yes, God is a wonder-working God, and he will appear for his people in distress as long as they are in this world. He often works in such a way they never can think of. We may run to this man or the other, but I tell thee, poor child of God, go to God, and tell him what thou owest. Tell him he has got all the gold and silver, and all the cattle upon a thousand hills, for he has promised that no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

"For this God is our God for ever and ever." Not only in time but it is *for ever*. Grace is only glory in the bud. Poor child of God, though thou art full of trials, troubles, and distresses, it will only be for a little time; and the poor ship that is sailing through this sea of trials, troubles, and distresses, will soon be landed on that blissful shore where

"Not a wave of trouble rolls
Across the peaceful breast."

And thou shalt sing: "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously. The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." "For this God is our God for ever and ever." Yes; not only in time but, blessed be God, it is for eternity; but, as the late Mr. Gadsby said, we have to go through death to get to the bottom of it. We have only a drop of it here; there is an ocean to go to

there. Now and then he sends full supplies for his church and people. He does not love to-day and not to-morrow. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

"This God is the God we adore;
Our faithful, unchangeable Friend;
Whose love is as large as his power,
And knows neither measure nor end.

" 'Tis Jesus, the First and the Last,
Whose Spirit will guide us safe home,
We'll praise him for all that is past,
And trust him for all that's to come."

It is for ever; yes, it is *for ever*. Poor child of God, if he has created a hungering and a longing in thy soul, he will be thy God through time and eternity.

"He will be our guide unto death." If he were to leave his people, where would they go to? He guides their wandering footsteps into the way of all truth. He leads them to the fountain-head, and he refreshes them there. Countless multitudes are drinking from that fountain, yet it is a fountain still. It never will run dry, never will be exhausted, in time or eternity.

All the stress of our text lies in this: The poor sinner whom God calls out of darkness will be guided by him into all truth; that is, into all essential truth. As John Philpot, the martyr, says, he will lead them to feel and see that they are poor, lost, helpless sinners, and that, whatever the poor sinner has received into his judgment, if he has never been brought to feel this essential truth, it is all nothing. This is the grand work of all real, solid, soul religion. The blessed Spirit leads the poor sinner to the Lord Jesus Christ, and lets him see that there can be no salvation from any other quarter. He leads him to him who is the Prince of Peace; and the sinner sees that in him there is a fulness of mercy and plenteous redemption. Now the psalmist exclaims, in every verse of Ps. cxxxvi.: "For his mercy endureth for ever." "Who remembered us in our low estate; for his mercy endureth for ever." He traces it all up to the mercy of God; that blessed fountain of mercy that flows from the Lord Jesus Christ to the poorest creature on the earth. If you have known anything of wrath, you will want to know something about mercy. He that feels his need of mercy, he that pants for it, never would be tired of it, because he will have to sing of it as long as eternity lasts. When thy poor soul shall be taken from this vale of tears, and enter into eternal rest, thou wilt hear of it there. Here thou hast it only in the bud; there thou wilt suck the sweetness of it from the very essence of the flower. There thou wilt have to swim in seas of bliss.

O blessed Guide! If a man fall into sin, God does not guide him into that. He leads his people into truth. He leads them into green pastures, where they go in and get a little bit sometimes, and come out again, and are ready to die for a crumb. They fear that their spot is not the spot of God's children, and that all their past experience is all nothing. Then the Lord, of his infinite mercy, is pleased to give them another little drop, just another little bit.

Him that he once calls out of darkness into his marvellous light, he will never leave a prey to the devil. Do you think he ever took a case in hand and was outwitted by the devil? Christ has paid the debt; and dost thou think that he could ever see thee in hell? He *will* have the purchase of his blood, and the triumphs of his victories, in spite of death, hell, and the grave.

He will be thy guide even unto death. He that hath begun a good work in thy soul will carry it on. "But," you may say, "do not you see some who have given it up?" Yes; but then they began it themselves. "He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." It is a good work that none other could begin; for he that made the heavens must make a Christian. It is out of the power of a mortal to create his soul anew. Watts says:

"Behold I sit upon my throne,
Creating all things new."

He must take away the heart of stone, and give a heart of flesh, which is, in truth, a new creation.

Now, let me ask you, my poor fellow-sinners, is there one in this congregation to-night who can thus lay claim to this God? There are some of you who fear you cannot. There is one thing that you must do. Can you say that you desire him? There is no better spot to come to. If you cannot say that, then I must tell you, feelingly and affectionately, the devil is your master. I do not wish to build up a hypocrite, but I wish to pick up poor, sensible, broken-hearted sinners. This mighty God, this eternal God, this Saviour, dost thou desire him? I say, poor sinner, dost thou desire him? Thou must answer it at the bar of God. Therefore, I tell thee again, if thou dost not desire him to reign over thee, the devil is thy master; and if you live and die in that state, you will be damned. This is plain dealing; I wish to deal plainly with you.

Poor little weak babe, dost *thou* desire him? There is one blessed promise: "The desire of the righteous shall be granted." There are many that desire him, and want their sins as well; but he that confesseth and *forsaketh* his sins shall find mercy. There will be more or less a cleaving of sin to us as long as we are in this world; but that is different to our cleaving to sin; and sin shall not have the dominion; it shall not bring you into condemnation. Throw thyself on the Lord as a poor guilty sinner, asking him to reign over thee, in all thy affections to rule in thee and to reign in thee, that thou mayest be nothing and Jesus Christ all in all. There will be a feeling in thy soul that thou desirest not to commit another sin if it be his blessed will. God hates sin. His anger and this hate spring from this, and from no other quarter,—a holy indignation against sin. Therefore, I say, if thou desirest God and thy sins, thou shalt be disappointed:

"God and mammon? O be wiser
Serve them both it cannot be;
Ease in warfare, saint and miser,
These can never well agree."

Now, my poor fellow-sinner, thou that desirest God under a feeling sense of thy lost state and condition, there is a blessed promise: "The desire of the righteous shall be granted." A blessed feeling it is; and if thou grieveest on account of sin, God will grant thee the desire of thy heart, and deliver thee from its power. He will enlarge thy heart; and if thou never gettest it fully here, thou shalt have it hereafter.

Now may the Lord, of his infinite mercy, lay these things on thy soul, and give thee a desire for this loving God, this compassionate God, this God that can help thee when all friends forsake thee, when thou art cast off by every one. This man may say thou art a hypocrite, and the other may say you know nothing of what you profess. Blessed be God, there is One that knows all about it. Suppose all the men in the world were to say you are a hypocrite, thy God will stand by thee. It is a mercy that I have a God to go to, one that I have walked with, one that I have talked with; and if you have got this God, if this God is your God, it does not matter what men may say of thee, or what the devil tells thee. He may tell thee thousands of lies. He has told me thousands, and he may tell thee thousands. It will lead thee to his blessed throne, and thou wilt be enabled to tell him he is a liar, and that thy God is a God of mercy and justice. May the Lord, if it be his blessed will, be thy friend in death; then he will be thy friend through eternity. Then it will be better for thee than if thou wast a mere earthly king; for he will grant thee a crown, and thou shalt cast it at his blessed throne. May he add his blessing. Amen.

The hand of faith never knocked at heaven's door in vain.—*Bishop Hall.*

THE mariner wants no skill and wisdom to improve several winds, and make them serviceable to his end. A bare side wind, by his skill in shifting and managing the sails, will serve his turn. He will not lose the advantage of one breath or gale that may be useful to him. I have many times wondered to see two ships sailing in a directly opposite course by one and the same wind. Their skill and wisdom herein is admirable. Thus prudent and skilful are men in secular and lower matters; and yet how ignorant and unskilful in the great and everlasting affairs of their souls! All their invention, judgment, wit, and memory seem to be pressed for the service of the flesh. They can learn an art quickly, and arrive to a great deal of exactness in it; but in soul matters they have no knowledge at all. They can understand the equator, meridian, and horizon; by the first they can tell the latitude of any place, south or north, measuring it by the degrees of the meridian; by the second they can tell you the longitude of a place, east and west, from the meridian, measuring it by the degrees of the equator; and by the third they can discern the divers risings and settings of the stars. And so in other arts and sciences, we find men endowed with rare abilities and singular sagacity. Some have piercing apprehensions, solid judgments, stupendous memories, rare invention, and excellent elocution; but put them upon any spiritual matter, and the weakest Christian, even a babe in Christ, shall excel them therein, and give a far better account of regeneration, the work of grace, the life of faith, than these can.—*Flavel.*

A WORD FROM AN AFFLICTED ONE.

My dear Friend,—O what a blessed Jesus! What will it be to be for ever with him! But I have felt of late the great condescension of the Lord to dwell with man upon the earth; for hath he not said, "I will dwell in them and walk in them?" And I can testify that he does. We might have had to wait till death for this great and wonderful favour; but not so. The word is full to the point, though we often have to walk in deep and trying paths. You, my dear, have passed through many, and can tell, "it is through much tribulation we enter the kingdom."

I had the strongest desire "to know Him, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and the power of his resurrection," &c., many years ago, and I can now praise his dear name that I was allowed so great a privilege; but I seem to have lost everything but Jesus; all my experience gone, all my sufferings lost sight of,—all, all gone, and I left a poor nothing, the same as at the beginning.

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesu's blood and righteousness;"

so that I can indeed feel the blessedness of that word, "Let not the rich man glory in his riches; let not the mighty man glory in his might; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness; for in these things do I delight, saith the Lord."

Who would not glory in such a God as ours,—our own Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?

Yours in the Bonds of the Gospel,

Uppingham, Dec. 1865.

SARAH ADCOCK.

[The above is by one who for many years has been laid on a bed of almost continual pain and suffering.]

HE SHALL TAKE OF MINE AND SHALL
SHOW IT UNTO YOU.

My dear Mary,—May the Lord, in mercy, support and strengthen you; may he so shine upon your soul as to enable you to *feel*, "Thy will be done."

O my dear! If the Lord should take away our dearest earthly comforts, and those on whom we seem most to depend, without whom we even seem as though we could not live, yet he is able to supply the loss of all things; and does he not often remove our earthly comforts and props for the very purpose of manifesting himself as our all in all? O that you may be enabled to rely upon him, to trust in him, and to believe that he loves you too well to give you one moment's pain or one trial more than is really needful. O how I have proved it again and again; and so will you, my dear, even in this case, deeply afflictive as I know it is.

Will you remember me affectionately to the dear sufferer, if he is still in the body? And if he should have been called away, may your heart be comforted and elevated by contemplating that exceeding and eternal weight of glory which those who fall asleep in Jesus awake to realise when they leave their bed of suffering.

My soul was favoured with such sweet enjoyment for two days, when I was confined to bed, in singing the song of the redeemed as it is recorded in the Revelation, that I thought perhaps my heavenly Father was about to take me to himself; but he has seen good to restore me again to health, and on looking back I feel as though my most gracious God had just laid me aside from the world, that he might show me something of the blessed and glorious treasure I possess in him. O, my dear M., how precious has he been to my soul! How good and gracious has he been to such a poor, vile worm! The ever-blessed and Holy Spirit has taken of the things of Jesus, and revealed them to my soul till I have been lost in wonder, love, and praise; solemnly and sweetly blessing and adoring the God of all my mercies, with feelings which I can never find language to describe. O that I could love, praise, magnify, and adore this great and gracious God with heart and lip and life, as I feel he is worthy.

I wish I could see you, my dear M. Do not think I forget you; and may you not think your heavenly Father forgets or deals hardly with you. May you be enabled to glorify him in the fire, and prove, by blessed experience, the truth of his promise: "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. Fear not; for I am with thee."

Yours most affectionately,

Glinton, Feb. 1852.

M. MARSH.

THE TENDER GRAPES.

"Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes."—CAN. ii. 15.

DEAR friend, if these no warmth impart,
(These weak effusions of my heart,)

Pray cast them all away.
And I will not intrude again,
If I no evidence obtain
That you like what I say.

The little foxes spoil our vines;
They cavil and dispute our lines,
And mar the tender grapes.
As with our loving Lord we walk,
How grieving 'tis to hear them talk,
And boast of their escapes.

They think what judgment they possess,
What knowledge and what cunningness,
To try and to condemn.
They laugh and jeer, and mock and scorn
The weakness of a soul new-born,
And boast, 'tis not like them.

The lisping of an infant's prayer;
The work of leaving all one's care
In Christ's almighty hand;
The sweet submission to his will;
The heavenly grace of standing still,
At sea, or on the land,

Are tender grapes.

The breathings of a filial fear;
 The drawings felt when Christ is near,—
 And how the bowels move!—
 The yearnings over him we love;
 The longings, too, to soar above,
 And *all* his kindness prove,
 Are tender grapes.

The holy worship at his feet;
 The way the Spirit makes us meet,
 And joins us all in one;
 The comely praise that's offer'd there;
 The beauteous robe we sinners wear,
 Who no good works have done,
 Are tender grapes.

The love that flows from heart to heart;
 The union death itself can't part,
 Nor Satan, with his hosts;
 The patience in the toilsome roads;
 The bearing of each other's loads;
 Why, honour no one boasts!
 Are tender grapes.

The daily dying to ourselves;
 The way we're saved "from rocks and shelves,"
 Yet sail with daily fear;
 The secret counsel we receive;
 The little things o'er which we grieve,
 And shed the silent tear,
 Are tender grapes.

The loathings on account of sin;
 The leper's cry, "Unclean, unclean!"
 And Satan's mighty power;
 The strong desires to be preserved;
 The groanings when from truth we've swerved
 In some unguarded hour,
 Are tender grapes.

The light that shines on that dear book;
 The precious glass in which we look
 To see if all is right;
 The gropings, too, we often know;
 The doubts and fears we undergo
 In th' cold dark winter's night,
 Are tender grapes.

The joy that's felt when morning comes;
 The true resigning of our homes,
 To serve the Lord alone;
 The zeal that does our hearts inflame;
 The jealousy for his dear name,
 Now he and we are one,
 Are tender grapes.

The untold glories which we view;
 The precious treasures, old and new,
 Which sovereign grace bestows;
 The way we're wash'd, and how we're dress'd,
 The way we're heal'd, and how we're bless'd,
 No hypocrite ever knows,—
 Nor loves,—Those tender grapes.

MEDITATIONS ON VARIOUS IMPORTANT POINTS OF OUR MOST HOLY FAITH.

I.

THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL.

(Continued from page 320.)

ACCORDING to the plan which we laid down in our opening Article,* we should now proceed to consider:

IV. The *blessings* which are promised to accompany the ministry of the gospel.

This part of our subject, however, we have already in good measure forestalled, since the *ends* for which the ministry was established, and which we have considered at so great a length, include most of those blessings which were promised to attend it to the church of God. But as these promised blessings much depend for their fulfilment on the peculiar character of the ministry itself, it being evident from observation and experience that a very wide and marked difference exists between ministers of truth, not only in the possession of grace and gifts but in the amount of the blessing of God which rests on their ministry; and it being no less evident from the word of truth that unless expressly called and sent by God and furnished by him with needful qualifications for the work, they cannot profit his people, it can hardly be considered a serious or unfair digression from our subject if we here turn aside to consider two important points which not only much concern but must ever deeply interest every true servant of the Lord. These two points are closely connected with each other, and are: 1. What is meant or implied by a *call* to the ministry; 2. What are the needful *qualifications* for its exercise to the glory of God and the good of his people.

i. We will consider first, then, what is meant or implied by a *call* to the ministry. In examining this point, the first consideration which presents itself to our mind is the striking fact that under the Old Testament dispensation none were true prophets unless expressly called by the Lord to that office. Now, from this obvious fact at once springs the important question, whether a similar call is required under the New Testament for the work of the ministry; and if so, whether it should be equally plain, signal, and clear? It seems desirable, if not necessary, to clear up this point before we proceed any further with the question of a divine call to the work.

That there is a considerable similarity between the prophets of the Old Testament and the ministers of the New most will admit; and if this resemblance be conceded it will follow that there is a sufficient analogy between the prophetic and ministerial offices to warrant a comparison between them both as to the call to, and the qualifications for, the exercise of each. Admitting, then, this similarity between the office and work of the prophet and the office and work of the minister, we must next inquire whether they are so similar that they must be judged by the same exact standard and weighed in precisely the same balance. According to our judgment,

* See our March No., page 63.

and admitting to the fullest degree the necessity of a call to the ministry, we believe that we are not warranted in applying the same rigid standard to both offices, and demanding from the minister the same clear, precise, and signal call which was required of the prophet. Two simple considerations may be sufficient to show this with sufficient clearness.

1. Consider, then, first, the great difference between the two dispensations, not only as regards their general character, but as respects what we may term their officers and ministers. Prophets, it must be borne in mind, were not an original part of the Old Testament dispensation. The priestly office, not the prophetic, was an integral part of the ceremonial law given at Sinai; and the priest, not the prophet, was the minister of God to the people. The strict parallel, therefore, would seem, at first sight, to be between the priestly and the ministerial office; but this comparison is not admissible on the simple ground that the priestly office was typical of the priesthood of Christ; and, having its parallel in him, cannot be extended beyond him to the ministers of the New Testament, without falling into the Romish error of turning ministry into priesthood. But the ministry of the gospel, as we have already shown, is a special New Testament institution; and, being the express gift of our risen and glorified Head, is neither priestly nor prophetic, though it has an analogy with each, but possesses a distinct and peculiar character of its own. We cannot, therefore, apply the same rigid rule to both offices, and measure a call to preach by the same precise standard as a call to prophesy.

2. But consider, secondly, that the prophets were not ordinary, but *extraordinary* messengers of God to his people. Some were raised up, as Deborah and Samuel, to be judges of the people; others, as Elijah and Elisha, to work mighty miracles; others, as Isaiah, Jeremiah, &c., to utter prophecies which should form a part of the inspired Scriptures. Now, how can we fairly apply to the ministers of the New Testament the same standard by which was measured the call of these extraordinary servants of God, demand from every preacher of the gospel the credentials of an Elisha or a Jeremiah, and declare, unless he were called by a voice from heaven, that he is a hypocrite and an impostor?

In handling, therefore, this point, we seem to have a line marked out for us which runs between two extremes. 1. That there must be a call to the ministry, that it may be exercised to the glory of God and the profit of his people; for if we set aside this, we do away with the ministry itself as a divine institution. 2. That this call need not be so signal and special as that of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, &c., or, we may add, of the apostles under the New Testament, who occupy, as such, a peculiar position.

Having thus far shown the reasons why we have marked out for ourselves the line which we shall endeavour to follow, we shall now proceed to consider what is in our judgment a sufficient, if not absolutely needful, call to the ministry.

Now, according to our view, it is a very difficult and delicate

point clearly to lay down what is a sufficient call to the ministry, for many of God's own sent servants, who have been most fully received by the living family as his commissioned ambassadors, have been much tried to make their calling to the work plain and clear to their own satisfaction, whilst some, if not many, who have spoken great swelling words of their call, are not commended to the consciences of God's own people as sent by him to preach his word at all, and have either been obliged to give up their preaching through positive failure of hearers, or from the thorough wearing out of what little gift they ever had for the work. Thus, when the trembling, exercised servant of the Lord has waxed stronger and stronger, and been more and more established in the hearts and affections of the family of God, these pretenders have become more and more manifest as led by a false spirit, and if not wilful deceivers, at least themselves willingly deceived.

When we say this, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we believe every sent servant of God will have, sooner or later, more or less, a witness in his own conscience that he is called to the work, for without some such inward testimony, he must soon faint under its burden, and always speak in fetters and shackles; but it may be some time before he is clearly established in his own mind. And besides this, he must have also a witness in the hearts and consciences of God's living people, who are often better judges of his call to the work than he himself can be, especially when he is under much trial and temptation.

What is thought to be a call to the ministry is more common than many persons suppose. In saying this, we purposely set aside all those schemes of human contrivance by which *pious* young men are manufactured into ministers by the gross, and can be sent out to order to suit any pulpit and any people; and we take as little account of those numerous instances where pride and ignorance, vanity and self-conceit, love of ease, and aversion to hard and daily work, combine, with some natural ability of mind and readiness of speech, to persuade an aspiring youth that a pulpit is the proper place for him to adorn, and for it to adorn him. Such men-made ministers, and such self-admiring beauties, have no place in the church of Christ, and no place in the consciences of those who know and love truth in its power. But take the case of one really called by grace in his youth, blessed with the love of God shed abroad in his heart, and possessed of a fair share of ability of mind, knowledge of the Scriptures, and utterance in prayer, private or public. Many if not most of such in the warmth of their first love, in their liberty of access and freedom of utterance before the throne, in their zeal for the truth in its purity and power, in their strong affection to the family of God, and in their devotedness of heart and willingness to suffer for the Lord's sake, feel such impulses and movements on their spirit as make them long to testify to all who will hear what God has done for their soul, and to give themselves up to his service. But time and circumstances abundantly show them that this was not a call to the ministry, for as

their first love declined, these movements towards the ministry declined with it, and they clearly saw that it was not the will of God that they should stand up in his name. It is not, therefore, any or every secret impulse or movement of the mind, even when honest and sincere, or any inward persuasion of the heart or desire for the work which will prove to be a call to the ministry, for many such blossoms drop off and are never matured into fruit. There must be, therefore, other things working together with the feelings and desires that we have named to constitute a divine and sufficient call.

1. First, then, generally there is a great *backwardness* to the work. We see this in Moses, Jeremiah, Jonah, Habakkuk, and if not expressly mentioned in the case of the other prophets, yet the words so often in their mouths, "The burden of the Lord," show the solemn weight with which the ministry pressed on their spirit. Those whom God calls to the work, he usually so strips and empties, so pulls down, humbles, and abases, so shows them what the ministry is, and their own unfitness for it, that they shrink back from so arduous and important a work, and can scarcely be persuaded that they are called to it. We need hardly remark how different this is from the forward, pushing, bold, if not presuming spirit which so many manifest in their ambitious aim almost to force their way into the pulpit.

2. Usually, too, there are strong and marked leadings in *providence*. A train of circumstances has been long at work, which, however obscure at the time, becomes cleared up when the moment arrives for unfolding the secret purposes of God. Hindrances of various kinds, such as business engagements, occupation or employment in life, fixed habitation where there was no door open for the work, opposition of wife or relations, repeated disappointments when the prospect seemed a little clearer, inability to move forward until the pillar and the cloud moved—these and similar hindrances are gradually or suddenly removed, and what was yesterday a mountain becomes to-day a plain. All the difficulties are taken out of the way in so marked a manner, and the hand of the Lord so clearly seen, that what once seemed almost impossible is now accomplished in a moment.

3. Usually, too, it entails not only suffering, but *sacrifice*. The labourer is worthy of his hire, and those who sow spiritual things may lawfully reap carnal things; but to go into the ministry for a piece of bread, to attain a respectable position in life, to feed a secret thirst for popularity and applause, to occupy a somewhat higher place in the church than a private Christian, to exchange a wearisome, irksome employment for comparative idleness and ease, to have the pleasure of hearing himself talk, to shine as a light, and be a teacher and a preacher instead of being taught and preached to; all such base, unworthy motives stamp a man at once as a hireling. God may, after a season of suffering and sacrifice, honour his servants by giving them such a warm place in the hearts of his people, and such a high standing in the church of Christ as shall elevate

them above their original position. Bunyan was raised from the tinker's barrow, and Huntington from the coal-barge, to an honoured place in the church of God; but we know through what sufferings, privations, and sacrifices these men of God passed in the first exercise of their ministry, and that though this honour followed, it was not their aim nor object in the first instance. Many, if not most of God's sent servants have had to come down before they went up, and to sacrifice good situations and employments, which, if not lucrative, were either likely to become so, or at any rate exceeded in value anything which they could expect from the ministry, especially in our connection, where the people are usually so poor, and the ministers so indifferently paid.

Generally, too, where there is a call to the ministry, there will be some peculiar *impression* fastened unexpectedly on the mind concerning it; or some secret, inward persuasion that it is the will of God he should stand up in his name; or some promise applied to the heart strongly looking that way; or some remarkable season experienced in prayer, when access was given to spread all his desires before the Lord, and there sprang up a humble petition to be made use of for his glory, which seemed to enter the ears of the Lord of sabaoth; or some intimation in hearing the word preached, or reading it in private, from the power which attended it, that a door would be opened to speak in the Lord's name; or some intense longing for the good of souls and earnest desire to be made useful to the church of God, which seemed as if it would not fall to the ground unfulfilled. These, and other similar impressions and intimations, are like the leaven in the meal which sets the whole mass to heave, ferment, and work. So through these peculiar impressions there will work almost day and night in the mind of one who has experienced them, exercises, desires, longings, cries, breathings, and petitions to the Lord; and mingled with them, there will be many fears of being deceived by false impressions, being deluded by Satan as an angel of light, or being impelled to so great and arduous a work by pride, ambition, lust of praise, and distinction, a name amongst men, or other equally base and carnal motives. But as these fears work, and the cry comes forth, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me," the soul is thus made increasingly honest and sincere, and willing to go or stay, speak or be silent, take up the burden of the Lord or leave it untouched, draw the sword in the van, or still tarry among the stuff in the rear. It may be some years, perhaps, before the way is made sufficiently plain—years of anxious waiting and watching, years of delayed hope till the heart is made sick, years of disappointment and vexation, but all working to a determined end, and gradually preparing the man to become an able minister of the New Testament, and not enter the pulpit as a raw recruit, but as one who can endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. The church, alas! is overrun with youths and novices who attempt to teach when they

need to be taught; and if ever they learn anything or are ever of any use, learn their business as an ill-taught medical student learns at last a little of his profession—by experimenting on men's souls as he on their bodies, and making a hundred mistakes for one right or successful treatment.

5. There will also generally be, where the Lord has called a man to the work, an impression on the minds of the discerning part of God's people; we say "discerning," for we take no account of the undiscerning and inexperienced who so abound in most churches, that he will one day stand up in his name. This arises sometimes from hearing his experience when he joins the church, sometimes from his peculiar gift in prayer, or his knowledge of and light upon the Scriptures, or his spirituality of mind in conversation, or his firmness in the truth, or his warmth and zeal in defending the cause of God, or his circumspect walk, his separation from the world and general devotedness of life; and all joined with that measure of mental ability which seems indispensable for a man who has to preach the word of God, to instruct the ignorant, edify the church of Christ, and convince the gainsayer.

Perhaps none of the things which we have mentioned would be sufficient of itself to be a call to the ministry, but the concurrence of some or many of them, like the flowing of many little rivulets to form one brook, make, by their combination, the purpose of God more plain and clear. Not that all who are truly called to the work can trace out with equal distinctness the marks and proofs of their call, but they can usually record some of those landmarks which have directed their path, and by which they have been led and encouraged to believe that it was by the hand of the Lord.

But we fully believe that, besides these peculiar leadings, every true servant of God will have two witnesses to his call, without which he can never arrive at any real satisfaction that the Lord has himself appointed him to the work. These two witnesses are, 1. The witness in *his own breast*; 2. The witness in the *consciences of the people of God*. Let us look at these separately.

1. We lay this down, then, as necessary to a man's being fully persuaded that God has called him to the work, that he will have, at times, the witness to it in his own breast. The Lord will, at times, so enlarge his heart, and so open his mouth; he will find, at favoured seasons, such a pouring in of gracious thoughts and feelings, and such a door of utterance to pour them out in words so suitable and so expressive, as if they were not his own, but were given him at the moment; such a power resting on his spirit to testify of what he has tasted, felt, and handled of the word of life; such a boldness to take forth the precious from the vile, that he may be as God's mouth; such holy warmth in declaring all the counsel of God, and yet no strange fire in his censor, but coals from the brazen altar; such a firm, solemn, believing realisation of the sacred truths which he is preaching, and such a sacred determination that, come what will, please or offend whom he may, he would sooner part with his life than part with the truth of God, as bring with them a sweet satis-

faction that the Lord has called him to the work of the ministry. As these seasons are repeated, with greater or less power, and are contrasted by him with those, perhaps, more frequent times of darkness, when he is so shut up in his soul and the door of utterance so closed that he has scarcely a gracious thought, heavenly feeling, or suitable word, he gathers up an inward testimony that the Lord has, notwithstanding all his weakness and unworthiness, doubts and fears, called him to the work; and the very difference between himself and himself—between himself in the stocks and himself on the tower, himself shut up and himself able to come forth, himself hacking and stammering and himself enlarged with the sweetest freedom of speech, himself full of bondage and misery and himself full of light, life, liberty, and love—this very contrast, which he so plainly feels, shows him only more clearly and distinctly when the Lord is with him and when he is not; and thus, by these very changes in his soul, these goings and comings of the Lord's presence and power on his spirit, he becomes satisfied that he is not warring at his own charges, but has been chosen to be a soldier to fight the Lord's battles. The way also in which texts are brought to his mind, opened up to his understanding, or applied to his heart; the light cast upon a passage when speaking from it, the suitable Scriptures which are brought to his memory to confirm his views upon it, and the sweet enjoyment which he has himself in or after the time of speaking from it; the secret prayer and meditation on the word which he has before he goes into the pulpit, and the holy savour which often rests on his spirit after the labours of the day; the sense which he has of the blessedness of the work, and his willingness to spend and be spent, labour and suffer, live and die in the Lord's service—these and similar experiences confirm him in the persuasion that the Lord has called him to the work, and is with him in it. He is brought to see and feel that his very sermons are not his own, and that he cannot preach them again with that life, power, and utterance which were given him with his text; that though he may take the same passage, he cannot handle it in the same way again; that he cannot open it, or enlarge upon it, or enforce it as before; and that he cannot recover even the light which then shone through it, still less the savour which rested on his spirit in setting it forth. But we must not further enlarge on this point, though we could say much on both sides of the question, from our own long and diversified experience of it.

2. But he must also have the witness in the hearts and *consciences of the family of God*. Without this testimony from others, his own will be of little avail, for "not he who commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." "In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established." (2 Cor. xiii. 1.) The testimony in his own breast is the one witness; the testimony in the consciences of others is the other; and the third, we may add, is the blessing of God resting upon his ministry.

This, therefore, we may next bring forward, as stamping a broad seal on his call to the work. Where a man is really called by God

to the work of the ministry, his blessing will rest, more or less, manifestly upon the word; power will attend it to the heart of sinner and saint, and the Lord will not suffer it to fall to the ground as the mere word of man. There will be, at various times, marked instances of some being called out of darkness into light, of others delivered from bondage into the liberty of the gospel, of others being brought out of temptation and soul distress into a wealthy place, of others specially favoured when much cast down with trials and afflictions, and of others being encouraged and strengthened to persevere courageously in their conflict with unbelief, sin, and Satan. Besides these special testimonies there will be also a general power and savour attending his word, which will gather and keep together a living people, few, perhaps, in number, but much united to him and his ministry, who highly esteem him in love and cleave to him for his work's sake. We do not speak here of partisans and flatterers, really a man's worst and most dangerous enemies, who cry him up as much as they cry all others down; nor of those weak and silly old women, of all ages and both sexes, who have no experience, judgment, or discernment in the things of God, and can receive almost everything in the shape of a sermon, and everybody in the shape of a minister; nor of those young people, and especially the female part of them, who admire the man almost as much as they admire the minister; but we mean the solid, well-taught, sober-minded, tried, experienced children of God, who know what they hear and whom they hear, and can tell the difference between chaff and wheat, letter and spirit, word and power, the noisome stench of the creature and the sweet savour of Christ. We will not, indeed, say that every called servant of God will at first, perhaps, obtain this clear witness in the consciences of the Lord's people, or to the extent which we have traced out, for, knowing what man is, and how easy the best may be deceived, they are slow to receive any minister; but, sooner or later, the Lord will establish his testimony to the call of his servant by commending it to feeling hearts, discerning spirits, and living consciences.

ii. And now for a few words on the *qualifications* for the work of the ministry. All must admit that if God call a man to the work, he will fit him for it; and if he have no such qualifications, there is no reason to believe that God has sent him. But what do we understand by qualifications for the ministry of the word? We may cast them under two simple heads: 1. Grace, and, 2. Gifts.

1. And first, *Grace*. Nothing is more evident than that a man without the grace of God in his heart has neither part nor lot in this matter. A man dead in sin, or dead in a profession, to stand up in the name of the living God to preach to a living people—what daring presumption, what an awful contradiction! And yet what troops of men there are, on every side and of every sect, party, and denomination, utterly destitute of the life of God, who call themselves ministers of Christ, and would resent, with the bitterest enmity, the slightest imputation or even suspicion that they are hypocrites or impostors. But all these, whoever they be, Church-

men or Dissenters, or whatever they be, high or low, we must at once set aside as only awful intruders into a work to which they were never called, and for which they were never qualified. But a man may have the grace of God in his soul, and yet have but little divine, spiritual knowledge of the truth, and little experience of its power. Now no one, who knows what the work of the ministry is, can say that such a beginner is qualified to be a minister of the gospel, and go in and out before the exercised family of God, as a leader and a teacher. We cannot, indeed, say what use God might make of him to beginners, like himself; but one would think that he had better tarry at Jericho till his beard is grown, than go up to Jerusalem with only a little down on his chin. "A novice" ("one newly come to the faith," *margin*) is expressly excluded from the work of the ministry. As "newly come to the faith," it is assumed that he has faith; but he is not old enough yet in the way to escape being lifted up with pride, or falling into the condemnation of the devil. (1 Tim. iv. 6.) And yet what beardless boys are now thrusting themselves everywhere into the ministry, and presume to teach grey-haired saints the way of salvation, who knew the Lord for themselves when these youths were in their long clothes; and, what seems worse, are hammered into shape and squared to pattern by a few lectures in Greek and grammar, or run into a mould by a course of what is termed theology, till they are stiffened into pride, and hardened in self-conceit, under what is called a preparation for the ministry. Alas! for any people when "children are their princes, and babes rule over them!" (Isa. iii. 4.) What is wanted as a gracious qualification for the ministry is, an experience of the things of God—a spiritual, saving knowledge of law and gospel, sin and salvation, self and Christ, affliction and consolation, bondage and liberty, temptation and deliverance, misery and mercy, the awful depths of the fall, the wondrous height of the recovery. How can a man preach Christ who knows nothing experimentally of his Person, work, blood, righteousness, death, and resurrection? of his beauty, blessedness, suitability, grace, and glory? of his love, and some measure of its breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and of the riches of his free, sovereign, and superabounding grace? And how can he enter into and experimentally describe the trials, afflictions, temptations, sufferings, and sorrows of the poor afflicted family of God, who is himself at ease in Zion, and knows only what he knows in theory, notion, and opinion? A minister attempting to preach without some good experience of the things of God, would be like a pilot taking charge of a ship coming up the Channel, who does not know one headland, lighthouse, buoy, or shoal from another; or like an engine-driver who should presume to drive an express train without knowing what handle to lift of his engine, or how to read aright the indication of his thermometer. But enough of this. Let us pass on to consider what qualifications are needful in the way of *gifts*.

2. We consider, then, that wherever God calls a man to the work of the ministry, he will qualify him for it by furnishing him with a

suitable and sufficient gift. We do not want learning, or education, or great mental ability, though when these are sanctified to the service of the sanctuary they have their place in the work, and are not to be rejected or despised. But what we want is a *door of utterance*, such as Paul prayed for. (Eph. vi. 19, Col. iv. 3.) By this is meant not a mere flow of words which is often but empty chatter, or that readiness and volubility of tongue which weary alike ear and heart, but that sober, solid, grave, sound speech which cannot be condemned, and by which "he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort, and to convince the gainsayers." (Titus i. 9; ii. 7, 8.) A minister should be "apt to teach," (1 Tim. iii. 2,) and, therefore, must have some teaching ability in him. But this requires at least such a clearness of thought and speech as shall preserve him and his hearers from being lost in a fog of confusion. The plainest, simplest language is the best; and that a man may have this in the highest degree and yet possess neither education nor learning, we have for witnesses Bunyan and Huntington, those masters of the English tongue in all its native simplicity, beauty, and strength.

But he must also be well *established in the truth*, and be able to open it up; and, when occasion demands, defend it. Error abounds on every side; and though we do not advocate a controversial spirit in or out of the pulpit, yet a minister should be able to defend truth and expose error. And he should be able to do this in a way simple and yet forcible, so as not to weaken the force of truth, or even, as some do, make it contemptible by handling it in so confused and bungling a manner as to grieve its friends and gladden its foes. It is surprising what force and power there sometimes are in a few simple words, or even in the apt quotation of a text with but little comment upon it. What light will often shine to a hearer through it on the truth, and how before it error will fall as Dagon before the ark.

He should also have a good *knowledge of the word*, not only as dwelling in his memory, but in his heart and conscience, and be able to open it consistently and experimentally, that he may feed the souls of God's people with milk and honey, meat and marrow, and give them to drink of the pure blood of the grape.

There should be also some *variety* in his ministry, which is best obtained by keeping close to his text, and seeking to open it through its breadth and length, which will much preserve him from unconnected rambling or dropping into the same round of experience, which, however good or sound in itself, becomes after a time wearisome from its very sameness and repetition.

But, above all things, there should be that *flow of divine life* into his soul, and that continual renewing and reviving of the power and presence of God in his heart which alone can give life to his gift, and make the well-spring of wisdom in him to be a flowing brook, watering, so to speak, both his soul and his ministry from that river of God which is full of water, the streams whereof make glad the city of God. Without this water in him springing up into everlasting life, his gift would soon wither and decay. In his ministry

there would be nothing new, nothing fresh, nothing sweet, savoury, or acceptable to the family of God. He may thump his Bible or the cushion, and try by noise and bluster to make way for his word to the hearts of the people. But he can only give the head-ache, not the heart-ache, stun, weary, and confuse; but his doctrine will not drop as the rain, nor his speech distil as the dew, unless the precious things of heaven and the goodwill of him that dwelt in the bush come as a blessing upon his head. (Deut. xxxii. 2; xxxiii. 13, 16.) A small gift fed with the life and power of God will not only live and last when a great gift unfed with heavenly oil will wither and decay, but will thrive and grow by exercise and use, by prayer, reading, and meditation, until it shines brighter and brighter, and gives a wider and increasing light.

But our limits warn us to stay our pen. The due qualifications for the ministry is a subject which has much and long exercised our thoughts, and on which we have formed in our own mind some definite conclusions; but we should need some space to lay them before our readers, even if we should ever venture upon a field so difficult and so delicate. Let, then, these few feeble hints for the present suffice; and sorry indeed should we be if anything which we have dropped on the subject should discourage the feeblest of the sent servants of God, or add the least weight to that "burden of the Lord," which, as his ministers, it is their highest privilege, though often their heaviest trial, to bear for his name's sake.

(To be concluded in our next No.)

THERE is nothing good in us, nothing that is well done by us, in the way of obedience, but the Scripture expressedly and frequently assigns it unto the immediate operations of the Holy Spirit in us. It does so in general as to all gracious actings whatever; and not content therewith, it proposeth every grace, and every holy duty, distinctly affirming the Holy Ghost to be the immediate author of them.—*Dr. Owen.*

IF thou ask, How can God, which is a Spirit, be served with outward, visible, and fleshly things, as the foresaid ceremonies of the Jews are? I answer, Such outward rites of the people of God were sacraments and tokens of heavenly invisible good things, and were not the heavenly riches themselves. Wherefore they neither served nor pleased God, who used and did such service, without faith and lifting up of the mind. But they that put their trust in God, cleaving only unto him, and lifting up their hearts higher, and remained not in the visible thing, those pleased God. Whereas they had but one altar and one place appointed where they should do sacrifice, it signified the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that he should be offered up but once, and that in one place, for the sin of the world. Therefore, whereas the high priest also every year went into the inward tabernacle with blood, it signified, that our Lord Jesus should come into this world, and shed his blood once for all, to forgive and cleanse our sins, and so to ascend unto heaven. Yea, all oblations and all sheddings of blood in the sacrifices of the old fathers signified the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing was cleansed among them without blood; which signifieth that all the purging of our uncleanness is done by the blood of Jesus Christ.—*Coverdale.*

Obituary.

ULRICH LEIBUNDGUTH.

JOHN ULRICH LEIBUNDGUTH was born at Illzach, a Protestant village near Mühlhausen, Upper Rhine. He was brought up to the trade of a lithographic printer; and when he was a young man, working in Paris, his employers, who had an establishment in London, proposed to him to come to England, to which he agreed. Though brought up a Lutheran, he was, when he came to this country, ignorant of his true state as a lost sinner, and destitute of any saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. He became acquainted with, and eventually married, the wife who survives him. To please her, he generally attended a place of worship on the Lord's day, but remained unconcerned about his eternal state, until he went one evening into a little chapel, partly from curiosity, and partly to pass away an hour. The preacher, in his discourse, set forth salvation by the rounds of a ladder, showing the various steps from convictions of sin to forgiveness by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ. His knowledge of the English language, always imperfect, must have been at this time extremely small, but sufficient was understood to make a deep and lasting impression on his mind. He knew that he had not trodden those steps, and he felt that he was not a believer. "Do I believe? Do I believe?" kept constantly running through his mind, and causing him deep concern. Sometimes he tried to stifle his convictions, but, the more he sought to drive them away, the more deeply were they rooted in his soul. He went to hear the preacher again and again, receiving sometimes instruction and encouragement. He now, therefore, became a regular hearer of the gospel, and was brought out of the world, leaving his ungodly companions behind him. Understanding so little of our language, it was chiefly in secret, by the teaching of God, without man's instrumentality, that he learned experimentally the sacred truths of our most holy faith. It may be observed that those who receive least instruction from man in the things of God possess generally the greatest assurance of the reality of what they believe. They know that they did not receive it of man, neither were taught it by man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Such was remarkably the case with the subject of this sketch, the "poor foreigner," as he used to call himself. He learned the truth of God, only as by experience he was led into a knowledge of it. He desired to know the truth, and nothing but the truth, and that savingly; and the Lord graciously fulfilled his desire, so that in due time he found peace of soul, and was established in the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. He was baptized at Little Wilde Street Chapel, London, and subsequently joined the church under the preacher under whom he had received his first convictions.

The poor foreigner was eminently a man of prayer; it was the exercise in which his soul delighted; he had received much consolation, as well as much instruction, in secret communion with his Lord. Having

now a little business of his own, and being often alone in his workshop, he would, as I have heard him tell, when overwhelmed with a sense of his sinfulness and darkness of soul, frequently kneel down beside his press, and pour out his heart to God, and many times he has found that place to be the house of God and the gate of heaven to his soul. Being thus a man given to secret prayer, it is not surprising that he should highly value, as he did, the public prayer meetings. On the Lord's-day and week evening he was always there; and he has told me that he could better understand the simple breathings of his brethren in prayer than the preaching. Hence his great delight in, and constant attendance at, these meetings.

We now come to a circumstance which led to his leaving that church and settling at Gower Street, of which latter church he continued an honourable member until his decease. The circumstance alluded to was this, the minister endeavoured to abolish some of the prayer meetings. This the poor foreigner could not bear. Besides which, the minister preached that a child of God could not backslide. Now, our friend knew, to his grief, that he had a heart which often departed from the living God; he used, therefore, to say to these people and the minister that he had a backsliding heart; from this circumstance, he was often called by them "The Backslider." These things, together with the levity displayed in the pulpit in speaking of the most solemn truths, so separated him in spirit from the ministry that he could no longer continue to listen to preaching which, so far from feeding and profiting his soul, only grieved his spirit. Accordingly he left. He had many times before leaving been to hear at Zoar Chapel, Great Alie Street, and at Edea Street, at which places the preaching was much blessed to his soul. Subsequently, he followed us to Gower Street, and finally settled amongst us, and he and his wife (an Englishwoman) were united with us in church fellowship. I shall not soon forget listening to the poor foreigner, as he told to the church, in broken English, some of the dealings of God with his soul, and the touching manner in which he alluded to the mysterious providence which led him to a strange land to bring him to a knowledge of the truth, and into the company of the people of God, whom he esteemed as the excellent of the earth. He was a bold and fearless defender of the faith once delivered to the saints; in its defence he feared no man, for his was the spirit of a Luther. He was brought amongst us at a time when such decided characters were greatly needed. As a church, the Lord had greatly blessed us; but he was now about to try us. The spirit of error was showing itself in our midst. Our standing, as a church of truth, was in jeopardy; the senior deacon and some members had taken up arms against the fundamental truth of the divine and eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ. We were divided; human friendship prevailed with some, and with others that false charity which extends alike the hand of fellowship to the lover of truth and the advocate of error. There was treason in the camp, but the main body stood firm, and some were emboldened by the danger. These having the love of the truth deeply rooted in their

souls, no fleshly influence was suffered to draw them aside from their true allegiance to the Son of God into a confederacy with erroneous men. The more fiercely the truth of God was attacked, the more fearlessly these stood up in its defence. Valuing their membership only so long as the church stood for truth, they would sooner have seen it broken up entirely than handed over to error. Amongst those who thus stood firm for truth, not one was firmer than the poor foreigner. He was for no compromise. The whole truth, and nothing but the truth, was his motto; and he stuck unflinchingly to it. For this he was charged with being of a bad spirit; but I am persuaded that a better spirit never moved in the breast of a man than that which prompted him to act as he did on this occasion. It was the spirit of love to the Lord which made him willing to sacrifice dearest friendships rather than part with one iota of the truth of God. His heart was full of love to all who loved our Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth; but nothing could reconcile him to error. I have blessed God for him in Gower Street Church, and for some other kindred spirits, one of whom, James Shallis, has since followed him to glory.

I have before noticed the delight he took in the prayer meetings. Nothing kept him away while in health. Church meetings and prayer meetings, there was he, always amongst the first to arrive. He was kept very lively in the ways of God, and could not rest in a cold, dull state of soul. If he were not in enjoyment of communion with the Lord, he must be seeking after it. He frequently engaged in public prayer at our meetings, and many can testify to the access which he evidently obtained to the Divine presence. When at liberty in prayer, it soon became evident, as at such times he would speak better English, and was less at a loss for words than usual; but when bound in spirit, he would say, "Lord, I am a poor foreigner. I cannot speak unless thou touch my heart." He had been in failing health for some time, and the friends had noticed a great change in him; but he attended the public means of grace until the swelling of his legs prevented him. The last sermon which he particularly mentioned as having been blessed to his soul was preached by Mr. Philpot, from the words, "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and spirit, which are God's." (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.) The last sermon which he heard was by Mr. Kershaw, which was about three months before his death. On one occasion, remembering that the friends were at that time sitting at the Lord's Supper, and feeling sad that he could not be there, he requested his wife to read in the Revelation, remarking, "It is so beautiful. All the majesty, dominion, power, and glory, belong to the Lamb; and find," he added, "the hymn about Gethsemane;" repeating, with great emphasis, those lines:

"Help there's none for such as we,
Only in Gethsemane;
Not a glimpse of hope for me,
Only in Gethsemane."

"Dear Jesus," he said, "we would go to thy table if we could. Do come to us." One evening he said to his wife, "It is prayer-meeting, my dear, and I know that my brethren are praying for me. Let us pray; for the Lord has promised to meet with two." In the course of his prayer, he said, "Dear Father, I feel very broken in thoughts, broken in speech, broken in spirit, yea, broken altogether; but not broken from thee, dear Lord. O, no; thou knowest I love thee; thou knowest how in my heart I want to love thee more, if I could." At another time he complained that he could not pray. "I feel myself," he said, "so heavy, I cannot pray. It seems like exercising myself in things too high for me. I wish you would send for Mr. M. I should so like him to come and pray with me. My heart has often been touched when I have heard him at the prayer-meetings." The peace he realised for months preceding his death was remarkable. I never entered his chamber but I felt the Prince of Peace was there. He would say, "How good the Lord is. I have all I want. I am so comfortable. I want nothing but the Lord; none but Jesus." About this time, his wife one morning left him alone a short time. On her return, she observed that some water had been dropped on her fender, and asked him whether he had spilled it. "Yes," he replied, "I spilled it, but the Lord will gather it up. Bless his precious name, he puts all my tears into his bottle;" alluding to the tears which had fallen on the fender, while, during his wife's absence, he communed with his Lord. I may here explain that, as he felt great difficulty in breathing in a lying posture, he was, for the greater part of his time, propped up in an easy chair by the fireside. He was thus seated when he dropped these heartfelt tears. One morning, shortly before his death, his wife, in assisting him from his chair, said, "Lean on me." He answered with much feeling, "I want to

'Lean on my Beloved,
And breathe my final groan.'

His wife remarked, "How willing you are to die." He replied, "Yes, it is so sweet to sit at Jesus' feet;" and then added, "Dear Immanuel!" I saw him frequently between this time and his death. His general state of mind was peaceful. He was mercifully supported, and sweetly delivered from the fear of death. Still, he was not without his changes; he knew darkness of soul, and this he experienced painfully a short time before he was called hence. I observed that he spoke less, and I saw sadness in his countenance. When I asked him the state of his mind, he replied: "O the Lord is good, very good; but I am so dark, I want him to come again." He has said, "I will see you again." This passage of scripture he often repeated. He hung upon that promise, "I will see you again;" as also upon these words, "Fret not thyself." He said, "No Lord, I will not fret, if thou wilt be with me. Thou art with me, for the darkness and light are both alike to thee." Many portions of Scripture and hymns were blessed to his soul during his affliction. Space will not allow me to name them all, but among them were:

“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear.”

“Ye pilgrims of Zion, and chosen of God,
Whose spirits are filled with dismay,
Since ye have eternal redemption through blood,
Ye cannot but hold on your way.”

Once when quoting these words, he said, “O how blessed that is, ‘They shall hold on their way.’ How glad I am to be among the living children of God; for it is the living that shall praise the dear Lord for ever and ever:

“When without sin we see his face,
And from the river of his grace,
Drink endless pleasures in.”

Amongst the Scriptures so greatly blessed to him was the prayer of Jabez. “What a beautiful prayer,” he said, “is that, ‘Keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me.’ I do so want to be kept from evil. I want all my thoughts fixed on the Eternal Truth.” He was very fond of the Psalms. He said there was always something to suit him there. He especially mentioned the xxiii., xxiv., xxxiv., xxxvii., ciii., cxxxviii. Of the Scriptures he frequently remarked: “It is a blessed book; a perfect book. We must not take from it, nor add to it.” He was now drawing very near to his journey's end, and though still in the body, his thoughts and affections were all above. His wife, (with whom he had lived in the sweetest affection many years,) he was entirely willing to leave, to be with Christ. He would pray over her, and tenderly commit her to the care of the Lord, and, when she wept at the thought of parting, would say, “Weep not, my dear. The Lord has said, ‘Fret not;’ and I know he will take care of you.” He had no relative in this country but his wife, but he had a brother and sister in his native land; and once when, in grateful remembrance of the kind Providence which brought him to England, he quoted the sublime words of Cowper:

“God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform,”

he closed thus with a prayer for his brother and sister, “Dear Lord, I know that nothing is too hard for thee. If it please thee, do look upon my brother and sister, that they may know thy truth in uprightness. It is all of thee. Do forgive, dear Lord, if I have asked amiss; thou knowest my heart, I leave them with thee, thou eternal Jehovah.” I have before alluded to the promise on which he rested, “I will see you again,” and also to the darkness of soul which he experienced for some days previous to his death. Such a firm persuasion had he that that promise must be fulfilled before he died, that when his wife wept, thinking he was dying, he said, “I shall not leave you yet. I know the Lord will see me again before I die, and he has not come yet.” On the morning of his death, his wife observed that though he spoke not, he was calm, and appeared to be quite dead to everything on earth. When she put her hand on him, he remarked in a very solemn manner, “You must not touch me now,” which conveyed to her mind the idea of his entire spirit-

uality from that hour. He lay quite still for a time, and a few hours before his death, he suddenly broke forth, and exclaimed, "O what a glorious change! The Lord has revealed himself to me, taken the sting of death away, and filled my heart with gladness. O what a change there is in the room! It is all light and glory." He said to his wife and a neighbour, who has kindly assisted in nursing him, "Don't you see the light?" They said, "What light?" "O the glory," he said. "It is all glory, but you don't understand me." "Ah," he added, "How many people are walking in darkness. How I wish they could see this Light, this great Light." In the afternoon a friend called in, who, seeing his happy state, remarked, "The everlasting arms are underneath you, the battle is fought, the victory is gained, and there is laid up for you a crown of righteousness, which the Lord shall give you." He said, "O yes, shall give, not may, but shall." From this time he lay still, tranquil, waiting the summons, and at nine o'clock in the evening, without a groan or a struggle, and with a heavenly smile on his countenance, he breathed out his soul into the bosom of his beloved Jesus, on the 11th of December, 1865. "Mark the perfect man, behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." To the writer, who dearly loved him, his memory is blessed. May my end be like his. He was interred at Highgate cemetery on December 19th. Mr. Taylor, of Manchester, committed to the dust, with great solemnity, the mortal remains of "the poor foreigner." F. M.

WHO ART THOU, GREAT MOUNTAIN?

LET the world go, I value Jesus more
 Than rubies, or than mines of golden ore;
 His Person, blood, and righteousness I love
 More than all earth below or heaven above.
 What he has done for me, no tongue can tell;
 But this I know, his presence suits me well,
 For I have found (thro' grace) once and again,
 His presence sinks the mountain to a plain—
 By his obedience to the law, I see
 Mount Sinai melted into love for me;
 High mountain sins by Jesu's blood alone,
 When eyed by faith, are in a moment gone.
 When faith is down, fresh mountains soon arise,
 And lift their lofty peaks up to the skies;
 'Tis then I droop and know not what to do,
 For my almighty Friend is not in view.
 But when by faith Zerubbabel is seen,
 Again the rugged mountains drop between.
 Nothing's too hard for his almighty arm;
 All things for me he can and does perform.
 Outward or inward mountains all remove,
 When faith can touch a precious Saviour's love;
 For what are mountains to that mighty one,
 Who, by his death, for sins did once atone.
 Let the world go. By faith in Christ I see
 I'm crucified to it and it to me;
 My Saviour's cross, I glory in it more
 Than deepest mines of richest golden ore.

A. H.

DECEMBER 1, 1866.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

DECEMBER, 1866.

MATT. V. 6; 2 TIM. I. 9; ROM. XI. 7; ACTS VIII. 37, 38; MATT. XXVIII. 19.

THE ADVANCE OF POPERY.

IV.

FEW great national revolutions of thought or feeling, and of consequent action, ever take place without a concurrence of many circumstances working singly or unitedly to a common and definite end. Of these some are so noiseless as almost to escape observation, and others so ineffective by themselves as to exercise little power or influence upon the public mind. But what is weak when single becomes strong when combined, as a number of thin wires, by being plaited together, form an Atlantic cable, or a successive addition of nameless rivulets swells at last into a mighty river. It is this varied combination of concurrent circumstances which makes the present advance of Popery so marked, and at the same time so formidable. Some of these, then, we will now attempt to trace out.

1. Nations, and especially the English nation, are liable to great changes of public feeling, sometimes sudden, and sometimes gradual, which seem to overspread the whole land as with a cloud, or infect the very air as with a kind of moral influenza. Such a revolution of public feeling was manifested at the restoration of Charles II., the most profligate monarch who ever disgraced the English throne, when the whole nation went as if mad with delight at the king's return, and rushed at once from the stern austerity of the Puritan rule into the vilest excesses of open debauchery. Such was the popular ferment in the time of Queen Anne, when Dr. Sacheverell's trial carried High Church principles on the crest of a wave which seemed as if it would overflow the whole land, and sweep away all Dissent before it. Such were the Lord George Gordon riots of 1780, when, to the cry of "No Popery," the mob were all but burning down London. Similar instances will occur to the memory of those of our readers who are familiar with the history of our own country. Politics are not our domain, and yet we may learn from them this grand fact, that no great changes are possible in this country unless the public feeling go thoroughly with them. Now apply this rule to the advance of Popery. We have been for more than three centuries a Protestant people, and though Popery

has again and again assailed us with all its arts and arms, all its baffled attempts have but made us more and more opposed to its principles and pretensions; for if we as a nation have hitherto prized any one thing above another, it is those liberties, civil and religious, of which it would rob us. As long as the nation is sound at heart, by which we mean determined to maintain its liberties, civil and religious, it is impossible for Popery to regain dominion over us. But what we most fear is the gradual sapping of these Protestant feelings, the relaxing and ultimate dissolving of this free spirit, and a sinking into a general indifference, under which the very spirit and soul of liberty languish. Let us see how this takes place.

1. As nations increase in wealth and luxury, the love of liberty universally decays; and at last nothing is desired by the rich but the quiet enjoyment of their wealth, and by the poor but easy work, abundant wages, and as much as they can procure of animal pleasure. History is full of examples how commerce begets wealth, wealth begets luxury, luxury begets love of ease and enjoyment, until the ignoble peace of servitude is preferred to the hard warfare of liberty. To this point England is rapidly hastening; and when the very principle of liberty is thus decaying from the root, what stand can be made against Rome throwing once more her fetters over us?

2. Simultaneously with this weakening of resistance on the side of Protestantism is the strengthening of Popish aggression. Our weakness is her strength. To see the stones gradually falling from the breach emboldens the besiegers to press on for the final assault. The eyes of the whole Catholic world are fixed on England, and all the strength of Rome directed there. What is called the "conversion of England" is Rome's daily longing and most eager aspiration. What a conquest for her! When Blucher rode through Cheapside he cried out, "O what a city to sack." Rome may well fasten her eager eyes on England, and cry to herself, "O what money for me to get hold of! O what ships to carry my emissaries all over the world! O what a language for me to speak in to the millions of the Anglo-Saxon race in the United States, in Canada, in Australia, in India, in New Zealand, in every land where the flag of England floats, in every isle and nook where English accents are heard, in every spot of the sunny East, frozen North, distant South, or wide West, where English hand toils or English foot treads. And for me, for me to be able to say to millions of the most active, energetic, civilized, wide-spread, and ever-spreading nation of the whole globe: England, the common mother of you all; England, the focus and centre of all your hearts and eyes, is at last converted—is at length Catholic, has returned, after ages of rebellion, to the one only apostolic and true church, and Protestantism, her ancient foe, lies dead at her feet." Is this a mere picture of our imagination? No, but the longing aspiration and unwearied aim of thousands and tens of thousands at home and abroad. And bear in mind that the policy of Rome is not to make much outward show, but to advance quietly and stealthily, securing post after post in the silent night,

and, creating no alarm by noise, obtain by stratagem what she could not get by force. Everywhere Rome has her emissaries secretly and silently at work. In high families there will be the Catholic French governess quietly introduced by a Romish peeress to work on the minds of the children; or the Parisian lady's maid of such taste in dress, nimble alike with tongue and finger, with her beads and crucifix in her own little room, but ever ready to speak a word for the Virgin Mary to the young ladies; or the active clever nurse, a member of some Romish sisterhood, for the invalid mother, availing herself of her weakened mind and body to establish a secret dominion over her, to draw her into a death-bed conversion to Popery; and all these sworn Jesuits, bound in body and soul to do Rome's bidding, and favour her cause.

For the middle classes there is the Puseyite clergyman, Romanist in heart, though as yet Churchman in profession, secretly leavening the mind of old and young in his congregation, and more particularly the young, with doctrines and practices which, though masked with a slight veil, are really Papistical in tendency and substance. These men are now spread broadcast all over the land, and are increasing in power and influence, and doing Rome's work* with English wages. At our great public schools many of the masters are decided Puseyites. At Cambridge and Oxford especially most of the tutors and professors are deeply imbued with the same views, and advocate them, publicly and privately, with no unsparing tongue. And all this at the most pliable, susceptible time of life, when the youth is emerging into the man, and, just escaped from the thoughtlessness and carelessness of boyhood, is open to every impression from stronger, more matured minds, and strikes out almost at their bidding a course of thought and action which is maintained steadily till death. None but those who have experienced it can tell the influence which a University education, with its studies, pursuits, habits, teaching, buildings, associates, and associations exercises on the mind just at the period when it is as clay to the potter, not hardened by contact with the world, the searing toils of business and money-getting, or the debasing profligacy of great cities. O that Rome should seize hold of these bright-eyed, warm-hearted, impressible youths, as lithe and active in mind

* Dr. Manning's words lately at Leeds are very significant: "He firmly believed that there was a great truth in the saying of the late cardinal, that the conversion of England would, by God's providence, be accomplished. When it might be he could not even dream, but this was certain, that the Roman Catholic Church of England was gradually expanding and extending, and that controversy was gradually dying out. He would ask his rev. brethren present how often they were now engaged in controversies regarding transubstantiation or invocations? (Several voices—"Very seldom.") Did it happen once a year? (Cries of "No.") Should he tell them why? It was because so large a number of the clergy of the Established Church had taken out of the hands of the Catholic clergy the labour of contending about the doctrines to which he had referred. (Hear, and applause.) The Catholics had been left to the much more happy and peaceful task of reaping the fields, (laughter and applause,) and he confessed he would rather be a humble reaper or a simple gleaner than armed with the weapons of war." (Hear, hear.)

as in body, the very flower of England, her future statesmen, judges, magistrates, members of parliament, bishops, and clergy, and win them over through the secret leaven of Puseyism, to her own doctrines and principles.

For the poorer classes the net is spread in a different way. Schools are now the chief implement which Rome is using to add to her ranks recruits from the working classes. Knowing how highly the parents, and the uneducated among them almost more than the educated, prize instruction, she is opening schools wherever she can find or make the opportunity to draw into her net numbers of Protestant children. She offers to their parents a cheap, if not altogether gratuitous education, adding, in some cases, gifts, books, clothing, with lavish promises of providing future employment, and, to avoid refusal, loudly disclaiming all attempts at proselytism. This last promise she may keep so far as to avoid positive solicitation; but she has ways to work on youthful minds by pictures, images, crosses, representations of Christ and the saints on the school walls and in books, with all that show of fervent adoration which, appealing vividly to the senses, easily entangles unwary feet. The child is taught by word or example to cross itself, to dip its finger into the holy water, to bow to the statue of the Virgin Mary, perhaps even to repeat the Ave Maria. The Catholic children mix with the Protestants, bully and persecute, if they can, the latter as heretics, viewing them, as they are taught and encouraged to do, as the godless offspring of godless parents; or if this be not allowed, still, by their continual example, lead them on, step by step, to those Catholic practices from which it is but one further advance to become Papists altogether. The priests are ever hovering about to entrap fresh scholars, or secure those in the net, and having full liberty to visit the school, can freely talk to the children, and confess or prepare for communion the elder pupils, and thus exercise an influence over the whole school. They are now opening schools everywhere in the poorer districts of London, and thus seizing hold of multitudes of children who, it is true, are at present utterly neglected, but whom they are gradually drawing into their ranks.

3. In all our large towns, as London, Liverpool, Manchester, &c., there is an immense Irish population, generally concentrated into one quarter, where, amidst all their filth and drunken brawls, they nurture a most intense hatred of everything English and Protestant, and a furious bigotry for everything Irish and Catholic.

Should Popery ever need open violence to carry its designs into execution, and we know from history that it has no conscience, no scruples on this score when its interests are at stake, an army is here at hand, the very bone and muscle of our working population, brave and combative to a proverb, and when excited, furious and bloodthirsty, cruel and remorseless, as Irish massacres have fearfully shown, almost beyond example. Hidden force is generally the most violent when it breaks forth, as every exploding coal-mine, every bursting steam-boiler will witness. Who can tell what the expansive force of our Irish population would be, now hidden in

courts and alleys, if ever the priests blew the trumpet for the desperate and final assault on our Protestant citadel?

4. Look, again, at Ireland, with the exception, perhaps, of Spain, the most bigoted Catholic country in Europe. England can neither do with her nor without her. She cannot be compelled, and she cannot be conciliated. The Irishman has naturally some noble qualities. He is brave, generous, affectionate, hospitable, acute, and intelligent, a most excellent husband, father, son, or brother; but all these qualities are marred, and as if neutralised, by intense nationalism and ignorant, intolerant bigotry, fostered by the traditions and habits of ages. All this lays him open to the wiles of the priesthood, who, themselves sprung from the people, know every chord of the Irish heart, and can play upon each string to rouse him or calm him at will. These priests, again, through their bishops, to whom they owe an implicit and servile obedience, of which, in this country we have no example, are under the direct orders of those secret Councils at Rome, in whose hands the whole government of the Catholic world is lodged. People think that the Pope is the seat and centre of all the Romish authority and power. So he is, nominally; but behind the Pope, and really his masters, are the Councils, such as that *de propagandâ fide*, consisting of one or two cardinals, the heads of the religious orders, and such secretaries of state as Cardinal Antonelli, before whom every matter comes, and who, by their correspondence with the whole of Europe, and through the confessional, have an intimate knowledge of every state and every cabinet. We cannot enlarge here; but see what a mine could be sprung under our feet were Rome to call upon Ireland to rise and aid her for the final assault.

5. See, again, the state of political parties amongst us. Parties in England are so evenly balanced that a compact body of 40 or 50 members, if they hang together, can carry or defeat any motion, make or unmake cabinets, and so impede, if not stop, every measure, that legislation becomes impossible. By the House of Commons this nation is governed. What, then, is Rome's policy? To return to Parliament, through the priests, they acting on the people as electors, only sworn adherents of Popery—men who publicly avow that with them the interests of their church are everything, and that they sink all other questions before their allegiance to Rome. It matters not what party is in power, Liberal or Conservative. A firm compact body of men who hold their seats on the fully understood tenure that they will do Rome's bidding, whatever it be, must always turn the scale in a House so evenly balanced. In this we believe, lies our greatest danger. We lately saw in the Parliamentary Oaths Bill, that the votes of the Irish members were a matter of bargain and exchange, and, though this compact was for the time defeated, yet it has already loosened the bulwarks of the Constitution. We discuss these political matters with great unwillingness, but it is absolutely necessary to understand them to mark the advance of Popery; and is of no use to blind our eyes to our greatest danger, under the idea that it is wholly a religious question. Had

our Puritan ancestors in the time of James II. declined all know-
of, and all interference with political matters, the chains of Popery
and despotism might have been on our necks at the present day.

We have, thus far, traced out a variety of concurrent circum-
stances favouring the advance of Popery, but on reviewing them we
must express a firm conviction that the two most formidable dangers
are, 1. The gradual assimilation of the Church of England to the
Church of Rome, through the transforming process, now everywhere
going on, of Puseyism. 2. The advancing influence of Popery in
the House of Commons, and its increasing power to defeat all mea-
sures opposed to its progress, and carry all which promote it. The
first threatens a revolution in the Church; the second a revolution in
State. And be it observed that each of those bodies possesses a
power and influence spread through all ranks of society, and diffused
through the whole country. Is there a city, town, village, or little
hamlet, north, south, east, or west, where the Church of England
has not its firm footing? What are a few Catholic chapels com-
pared with our parish churches, in either number, congregation,
wealth, or influence? It is true that the Dissenting bodies rival the
National Establishment in numbers, and were they united in one
firm band on the broad grounds of Protestant principle might offer
an effectual bulwark against the advance of Popery through this
avenue. But, as we hope hereafter to show, they are, as a body,
utterly weak and powerless, and sunk into a general apathy and in-
difference. The other source of danger is still more formidable. The
House of Commons rules the whole country. If Popery, then, can
but advance her throne there, she has the nation at her feet. The
Lords must follow; and what security have we that the Crown would
hold out when the removal of the Coronation Oath shall have
smoothed the way?

Assume, then, these points to which we are fast hastening—
a Romanised Church and a Romanised Parliament; assume a
threatened revolution at home or a foreign invasion from abroad;
assume everywhere confusion and distraction, commercial embarras-
ments, an unemployed, discontented population, an Irish rebellion, a
weak and tottering Government, and Rome pressing her claims at
a juncture when all opposition is paralysed; now tell us whether
her day of triumph may not be wrought out of these concurrent cir-
cumstances, or whether these are airy dreams, or possible, not to say
probable events, and almost looming in the dim horizon. At any
rate, are they not sufficient to raise a well-founded alarm at the
progress which our own eyes have witnessed that Popery has made
during the last quarter of a century? and do they not call upon us,
with a loud and ever-increasing voice, not to sleep at our post, but
to pray and WATCH?

You that fear God, and can tell what God has done for your souls,
must not expect to live likethe rest of the world. You have mansions of
glory, which they have not; so that a grain of real grace is worth a
million worlds.—*Tiptaft.*

THE FULNESS OF CHRIST. BY JOHN RUSK.

Dear Friend,—Grace, mercy, and peace be with thee.

I received yours, dated July 1st, and have now sat down in order to answer it. Were I to consider my fitness, I should not put pen to paper. Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, and not a whit behind the chiefest of the apostles, in whom the grace of God was abundant with faith and love that is in Christ Jesus, declares that he was not sufficient of himself to think anything as of himself, but that his sufficiency was of God; and it is one grand and evident mark of real grace to keep us self-emptied; yes, it is for this very thing that we have so many exercises, and so much furnace work, for we are continually bent to get into self.

As it respects the particular question that you ask me, in your last letter, respecting either leaving — or continuing there, I have begged of the Lord to enable me, a poor fool as I feel myself, to answer you, and really to put myself in your case, which is the proper way. I must say, I should stay at —, and not move one step. This is my advice. I know it is a blessing to hear the word; but the strifes and debates, and continual contentions, backbitings, &c., that are now going on amongst many that we hope well of as respects their eternal state, make me more and more wish to be singular, and follow the Lord fully in secret; and as the Lord has placed you where you are, do not leave without you clearly see him going before, for “when he puts his own sheep forth, he goes before them, and his sheep hear his voice.” If you could only believe how I have gained in this secret way, for all real godliness lies between God and our own souls. Take notice of the following texts: “Enter thou into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father in secret, and thy Father, which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly.” Again: “Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God.” “Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom.” If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself. I know them that hear the word preached constantly, and I hardly ever hear it compared with them, on account of bodily weakness and various things; and I have been again and again in their company, but I envy none of them, for they are continually at this backbiting. It is true that all are not so. There are a few, and but a few comparatively, that are simple, honest, teachable, tractable, and artless. And really I love such, for they are not wise in their own conceits, nor are they turned aside to vain jangling, nor corrupted from the simplicity there is in Christ.

The Lord direct my friend for the best; but really I see nothing; upon the whole, to advise you to leave where you are; and I believe if you did, you would soon be sorry for it. I tell you my mind freely, and do not forget that the Lord has promised to be a little sanctuary to us in all places where we may come. God is not confined to outward means. My poor wife hardly ever can hear as she could wish, and yet the Lord keeps her more spiritual, and I can speak better to her about spiritual things than to many that are

always hearing and pretending to great things under the word; but I am slow of heart to believe what such say.

Now, in all this I am not speaking against the ministry of the word. God forbid; and I hope you do not understand me so. I have too long known the worth of it years ago, under W. H., to do this. But these days are past, and I am now to "remember how I have received and heard," &c. We are getting into very dark days. Things will get worse and worse. Errors abound on all hands, and some are in errors, and yet not discovered by many simple souls. Cleave close to the Lord in secret, be constantly examining yourself, and endeavour to confess to the Lord wherein you are wrong. Search the Scriptures, and call upon the Lord continually. Be as reserved as possible from professors. If you find one or so that is simple and honest, cleave to such; but depend on it that too much going amongst professors is hurtful. Read sound authors. You are heartily welcome to anything that the Lord has helped me to write, for I really wish you well; and it is condescending for him to own and bless any of my feeble attempts, which have been done under a deep sense of my ignorance, sore temptations, and hard fightings.

Thus I have told you my mind, and shall leave this part of the letter now with God and your own conscience, begging that he himself may guide and direct you in all things. Remember, he is "a Leader and a Commander to the people," and has said, "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way thou shouldest go, and guide thee with mine eye." In all your ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. God grant it, for Christ's sake. Amen.

Now, as I had been, in simplicity, giving my friend advice, when I had finished one side of the letter I felt straitened and had no heart to proceed; so I went to the Lord, to ask him what I should say on the other two sides, and felt greatly my need; and when I got up from my knees, I thought of those words, "The fulness of him;" and what can be more suitable for such poor, empty creatures as you and I than One who is fulness itself?

I shall briefly take these words up.

I. As it respects his *Godhead*.

II. As *God-man*.

III. That his fulness is *for the poor and needy*.

I must be very brief, to say a little upon each.

I. *As God*, he is fulness itself, for he is the self-existent Jehovah. In him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Every perfection peculiar to Deity is in the Second Person of the Trinity, Jehovah the Son; and this is clear enough to be found in Holy Writ. Are the Father and the Holy Ghost omnipotent? So is God the Son. Hence he says, "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth." When the word "given" is mentioned, we are only to understand his humiliation, in that he took our nature, and not in the least to suppose any inferiority. Hence, when speaking of his incarnation, he says, "My Father is greater than I;" but when he speaks of his essential divinity, "I and my Father are one," and in the Reve-

lation he tells us that he is the First, then none could be before him; and the Last, then none could be after him; and the Almighty, then none could be above him. Thus he is *omnipotent*.

Again, he is *omniscient*, and, therefore, after his ascension to glory, they (the apostles) put up their prayer to him as the omniscient God, who searches and tries the heart: "Thou Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen."

And he is *omnipresent*. Hence you hear him say, "Lo, I am with you always, to the world's end." And there is not one perfection of Deity which belongs to the Father and the Holy Ghost but what can clearly be proved from the holy word, in the highest sense, to belong to God the Son.

Thus, in a very short way, I have proved that he is fulness in respect to his Deity.

But, II. As *God-man*. Now, here, all he had, as it respects his fulness, was a free gift, according to covenant engagement, as a reward of the great work he was to accomplish; and this accounts for all those passages of Scripture which speak of blessings given to the Lord Jesus Christ, and promises made to him; and you must view things in this way; for, considering him as God, what could be given to him who is all fulness itself? And here we may see the exaltation of our nature, in that it is joined to his divine Person, and in that nature he is all fulness. The Holy Spirit was given him without measure. He was anointed with the Holy Ghost above his fellows. All fulness of grace is in him, and all the blessings of the new covenant. Every promise in him is Yea and Amen; and all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. So that Christ is all, and in all. He is all to us and all in us. And this shall bring me to notice,

III. That this fulness is *for the poor and needy*. Now, it is well received amongst God's family that when the Lord takes his people first of all in hand, he finds them poor enough, although they do not know it; and he carries his work on in them till he reduces them to real poverty and neediness, feelingly and experimentally so; for he properly strips them of all. This no one that is taught of God can deny; but that we are, ever after this, to be kept poor and needy and self-emptied, is no easy lesson to learn and to be well established in; and, therefore, we are surprised at having deeper and deeper discoveries of our own hearts, and staggered at our feeling worse and worse. However, so it is, and therefore the Holy Spirit teaches us, and keeps up this teaching daily and hourly, that we are poor, needy, destitute, empty of all good, and bent to all evil, and every now and then testifies of Jesus; and we find a fulness in him, and a satisfaction to our souls, which all this world, put all together, cannot give; and when this sweet influence abates, which it continually does, then, of all flesh, we are feelingly the most wretched and miserable; and we may try other things as a substitute for this, but we find the truth of what Cennick says in his hymn:

"an aching void,
Which God alone can fill."

And now we try, and it is right that we should, all the means of

God's appointment, and think, to be sure, that we shall repair our loss this way. But although the Lord may thus favour us at first in seeking his face, yet, to teach us that without him we can do nothing, (a hard lesson to learn,) he lets us try again and again, and we find now that he is the fulness of all means; so that we may try again and again, but we remain just where we were, poor and needy, empty, dry, barren, carnal, worldly, and not only destitute of all good, but full of all evil.

I have had plenty of time before me now, when out of work, and have tried everything I could, to read, to write, to pray, to read my past experience or other books, to hear, &c., but have proved everything, in and of itself, all dead, and I know that Jesus Christ himself, in a sovereign way, will fill all means. Suppose you and I go to hear the best preacher that is; if the word of King Jesus is not there, there is no power; but what is his word? Not preaching abstractedly, but a power that he displays in the word preached. Hence "he speaks as one having authority, and not as the scribes, for his word is with power." My word is spirit, my word is life. The church, in the Song, passed the watchman, and then she found him; and that was what she wanted, and so do you and I. But, again, prayer is another means; but he is the fulness of that also: "Whatsoever you ask, ask in my name, and I will do it." And how soon we can tell the difference between our frozen, narrow, contracted prayers, and when the blessed Spirit, the fruit and effect of his ascension to glory, helps our infirmities.

But, again. Christian conversation is another means. But how shut up, and nothing to say; and if we do, it is all forced. But if he comes, all is right: "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and opened to us the Scriptures?" Again, if we sing, which is another of the means; yet, to sing aright is to sing with grace in our hearts unto the Lord; and all grace comes from his fulness: "Out of his fulness," says John, "have all we received, and grace for grace."

Reading also is a means; but the Bible is a sealed book, and all others. Let the authors be ever so sound and experimental, you may read, but to no profit, unless he opens your understanding, as he did that of the disciples, going to Emmaus. And examination and confession of sins also, these are means; but as without him you can do nothing, so here also he must work in you both to will and to do.

Meditation is another means: "Isaac went out in the fields to meditate." And what is the fulness of this? Why, Christ. Hence David says, "My meditation of him shall be sweet."

From what has been said, Christ is all, if you speak about blessings, whether spiritual or temporal. If spiritual, we are, "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ;" and if temporals, "all things are put under him," whether they be silver, gold, &c. He says, "It is all mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills;" all sheep and oxen, fowls of heaven, fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea, for he is the heir of all things.

If of grace, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. If of life, he that hath the Son hath life; for he is the quickening Spirit, the Lord from heaven. If of salvation, he is God's salvation to the ends of the earth. If of peace, "he is our peace," and he made it by the blood of his cross. If of mercy, the sure mercies of David were given to him. If of rest, he is this rest, and gives it: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heaven laden, and I will give you rest." If of a good hope, he is the hope. Hence Paul calls him "that blessed hope." If of strength, we can, with Paul, do all things, if Christ strengthens us. I believe there are hundreds of precious promises, but they are all Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus. In short, as he says himself, the Scriptures testify of him; for if of creation, all things, in heaven and on earth, were made by him, and for his glory: "All things were made by him," not as an instrument, but by his almighty power. It was to him that all the prophets gave witness. We read also of judges being raised up; and it is in righteousness that he judges and makes war. Kings also; and he says, "By me kings reign." He is King of kings and Lord of lords; and he is the resurrection and the life, and every one shall hear his voice at the last trump. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." (1 Thess. iv. 16.) And after this we shall be with him for ever in glory above; for "the Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed us, and lead us to living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes."

The Lord favour you and me with constant believing views of Jesus Christ; and may he be pleased to fill us with all joy and peace in believing, until we safe arrive at the haven of rest, where we shall enjoy uninterrupted felicity; where we shall bid adieu to all sin sorrow, pain, afflictions, temptations, dark providences, knotty experiences, hatred from men and devils, and sing "salvation to God and the Lamb" for evermore. Then faith will be turned to sight, and we shall be perfect in knowledge. We shall see him as he is, and be like him, for he that is perfect shall be as his Master; and he says, "Him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sat down with my Father in his throne." And this is our comfort, that all our victory is in him. He is the mighty Conqueror, and tells us to be of good cheer, for he has overcome the world, and because he lives we shall live also. He overcame all devils, sin, and death for us; and here lies all our happiness. Yes, and every soul that he filled while upon earth he will fill with all the fulness of God to all eternity. Take notice of his own words: "I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment, that I may cause them that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures." That is, "I myself will be the fulness of all their treasures of grace and glory for evermore."

That this may be our happy and blessed lot, to live a life of faith here, and follow the Lord fully, like Joshua and Caleb, the Lord grant, for his name and mercy's sake, who is with the Father an

Holy Ghost worthy of all honour, glory, dominion, praise, and power now and for ever. Amen.

Mr. Gadsby is to be at Gower Street on July 27th, and continue three Lord's days.

July 25th, 1823.

Yours, in Christian love,

J. RUSK.

LETTER TO THE LATE JOHN KEYT.

Dear Brother,—Your kind epistle came to hand safely, and sweet and refreshing it was to read its contents. How sweet was the poet's language while reading it:

“E'en down to old age all my people shall prove
My sovereign, electing, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne.”

It appears you have not one fault to find with our dear Lord that has helped you on all through to the present moment. He has done all things well, and never failed us, no, not in one thing; but has ever been our present help in time of trouble; yea, and he ever will be eyes to the blind and strength to the weak. Bless his dear name, he will never leave nor forsake us; yea, he will guide us unto death, and afterwards receive us to glory.

What a wonderful shout of grace it will be when all the family are housed together, where there will be no noise of archers, but an eternity to rehearse the glorious wonderful acts of the love, mercy, and grace of our ever-adorable God and Saviour, in all the glories of his wonderful Person, work, characters, offices, relationship, and glory. We shall not then see through a glass darkly, but face to face; see as we are seen, and know as we are known. O happy home! where the wicked cease from troubling, and the poor weary pilgrim is at his eternal rest; where there is no hungering, nor thirsting, nor groaning, nor darkness, nor hardness, nor unbelief, nor any gun-shot from the devil, nor one single thing to distress our poor souls for ever!

“There shall I bathe my weary soul
In seas of heavenly rest;
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast.”

It will be all right then, my dear friend, for the inhabitants there shall never say they are sick. We shall then prove to a happy eternity, that our light afflictions, which were but for a moment, have worked out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

But you want to know how matters are with me, and what tidings from ——. I can assure you, as it respects myself, I am a poor, blind, helpless, foolish, rebellious wretch; the least of all saints, and the greatest of all sinners; a babe in knowledge, but an old man in sin; as stupid as an ass, as ugly as an owl, as crooked as a serpent,—vile and base as a devil, after all the mercies the dear Lord has manifested to worthless me for nearly these forty years in this vale of tears since he stopped me in my mad career. I am still as vile as ever, as helpless as ever, as needy as ever; and sometimes I can

assure you I appear to have no more grace in my heart than there is in the devil, and really stand astonished, at such times, and wonder what sort of a God he is that he can let such a monster live upon the earth.

Ah, my dear brother, I find to my sorrow that the old man is still alive of whom I spake when in London; and I think he is as active, strong, and lively as ever; but thanks, honour, and glory be to my dear and ever-blessed God and Saviour, he is as faithful as ever, as merciful as ever, as powerful as ever; and gives me now and then a sweet visit. Though it is so short, it is very precious, sweeter than honey or the honeycomb; but sometimes I am afraid he never will return to such a wretch again. I really fear sometimes I have quite wearied him out, for I am confident there never was such a God-dishonouring wretch out of hell when left to myself, and I fear at times I have completely tired him out. But no. Bless his holy name, he comes again, "skipping over the hills, leaping upon the mountains;" and O his blessed voice when he speaks: "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away; for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come; and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." Every hill and every mountain flow down at his presence; and every devil trembles, and all gather themselves into their dens; while poor worthless John goes forth in the delightful work of praise, love, and adoration to the Three-One God; shouting, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; for when I fall I shall arise; when I sit in darkness the Lord will be a light unto me." "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?" So that you will perceive by these short hints whereabouts I am; that is, if God leaves me to myself, sullen, stupid, hard, rebellious, peevish, discontented, unbelieving, proud, earthly, sensual, and devilish. If he draws, I run; if he smiles, I can smile too; if he owns me as his child, I can embrace him and call him "my Father;" if he gives me faith, I can believe and confide in him; if he subdues the enemy, I can shout "Victory," and am as bold as a lion when the enemy is running away. So that you see I am about the old spot. "Without him I can do nothing." Bless his dear name, I do not want to do anything without him. "Two are better than one," I am confident, "for if one falls there is another to lift up his fellow."

As a church and people, we are going on very comfortably. We live in peace, and I do believe the God of peace is amongst us. I am sorely tried, at times, in the work of the ministry. It appears to me, at times, that I am entirely left of God, and afraid, at such times, I shall prove an awful apostate, having no heart to pray or to read God's word, nor any desire for the welfare of Zion, as if my soul were a dead post; but at other times so full of all manner of evil things in my heart that I stand astonished, and cry out, "Can ever

God dwell here?"—darts of blasphemy flying through my mind, horrid presumptuous feelings, that I feel as if I cared not for either God or man, heaven or hell, time or eternity.

O my dear friend, my very hair has stood on end almost sometimes, when I have been in this state, and had to go into the pulpit; but God is his own interpreter, and he *does* make it plain. How many times have I been plunged here, to fetch up some poor soul that has come to the chapel to make the last trial of his mercy! O bless the dear name of our covenant God, the end is always better than the beginning. Neither you nor I have ever proved yet but that every storm has ended well. Every trouble came at the right time and by the right way, and has answered the right end; so that we know afterwards all have produced the peaceable fruits of righteousness, to the praise and honour of our God, and wonder, peace, and joy in our own souls. And bless our God, he will never, no never forsake us; we shall come off more than conquerors through him that loved us. The top stone is, "Grace, grace!"

O that the Lord may bless you with his dear presence and love; for this is a blessing that maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it; and that you and I may be found bound up in the bundle of life, and be for ever with the Lord.

This is the prayer of your unworthy Brother,

Feb. 26th, 1836.

JOHN WARBURTON.

A RELIGION THAT WILL DO TO DIE BY.

My dear Friend,—On Tuesday evening I told your friend Mr. H. that if you had a vacant day the last Lord's day in May, I thought, if I were spared and able, I could come to you. But on Wednesday morning I had an invitation to go out one of the three last days in May; so that I must go then, if able, the last; and then, if I can, I will try to come to you once in the summer, as I have seemed to keep a day to visit your place once more, should it be the Lord's will. You must not think by this that I am like Elibu, Job xxxii. 18-20, nor do I think I am become anything of a preacher, or that I ever shall be; but I feel constrained in my spirit to continue in my feeble manner and measure to stammer out what little I am able of God's holy truth while he continues me in a sufficiency of health and strength so to do. It will be a very little time before the handbreadth of my poor life will be filled in, and the earthly house of this tabernacle will be taken down. I humbly trust I have been able in the fear of God, and with the witness of the Holy Ghost and my own conscience, to repeat the words of the apostle, 2 Cor. v. 1. But at times I find a faltering of speech, lest after all, my own deceitful heart and the enemy of my soul may have deceived me.

O my friend, it is a solemn weighty matter to be a professor of the name of the holy Lord Jesus, even for those who, through the wonderful mercy of God, have oil in their vessels; but truly and eternally awful for those whose lamp will go out. do at times

earnestly covet that religion that dear Mr. Tiptaft was wont to speak of as "a religion of the right sort," "a religion that will do to die by;" and do trust the Lord, in his great mercy and love, has bestowed this upon my unworthy self. But how unthankful I am; how little I love him; how poorly I serve him; how loosely I follow him; how cold, dead, dark, blind, ignorant, unprofitable, and unfruitful; how much pride, unbelief, sin, and folly; what lightness and trifling I am the subject of; how much of anger, strife, self-will, self-righteousness, self-pity, and self-seeking. Yet how wonderful is the Lord's mercy, goodness, favour, and long-suffering unto one of the most unworthy of all. He has borne with me, kept me, fed me, clothed me in his kind providence, who am less than the least of all his mercies, and who have deserved at his holy hands nothing but death and the deep; yet he has kept alive my poor soul, revived my hope, carried on and maintained the work to this day; and although I have many foes and fears, dangers and doubts, sinkings and tremblings, yet he has held me up in every flood, been with me in every furnace; and my anchor hope has held and saved me in every storm, and in all the billows I have had to encounter; and although the fight is undiminished, and though I feel weaker and my foes stronger, I still hang my helpless soul and all her hopes upon the Person and power, blood and righteousness, salvation, intercession, love, and mercy of him who died on Calvary for poor sinners.

"The gospel bears my spirits up;
A faithful and unchanging God
Lays the foundation of my hope
In oaths, and promises, and blood."

I did not intend running on so, and hope you will bear with it as best you can.

Give my kind love to friend T., and any others who know and have any regard for your present scribbling correspondent.

Yours in hope of the grace of life,

Cirencester, March 2, 1865.

J. T.

CONFESSION OF A PAUPER.

My dear Friend,—When I wrote to you before, we were expecting the death of my son, and I wrote in much affliction; but just about that time, or immediately after, there were some symptoms of improvement; and it has pleased the Almighty to restore him again, at least to a state of convalescence. He is still weak, but gradually improving, even beyond our expectation. Surely we have abundant cause to be grateful.

But O, the depth of my ingratitude, and the utter helplessness of myself! I feel the reproof in Deut. xxxii. 18 applicable to me: "Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee." I am daily more and more convinced that all right worship, either of prayer or praise, is the work of God the Holy Spirit. Christ told his disciples, "Without me ye can do nothing." I believe I can set my seal to the truth of this, and can heartily join in the prayer of Erskine:

“Thou seek'st, my faith, my flight from sin and guilt;
Give what thou seek'st, Lord, then seek what thou wilt.”

Not a good thought, word, or deed, can I, of myself, produce. I never did a good act, and I know that I never shall do. My highest pretensions as to what I can do is to sin against God; “for I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwells no good thing.” (Rom. vii. 18.) Yet I would be holy as God is holy; for sin is the cause of all the sorrow that I ever felt, that I now feel, or that I shall feel on this side eternity. But there is a precious promise to meet this. “He (Christ) hath put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;” (Heb. ix. 26;) and it is only by faith in that that I can find peace. I am a pauper upon the bounty of Heaven, a debtor to grace, and anything short of hell is a mercy to me. How welcome, then, is that promise “I will be merciful to their unrighteousnesses.” Again: “I will have mercy and not sacrifice;” “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;” “It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.”

“Sinners are high in his esteem,
And sinners highly value him.”

Your sincere Friend,

H., November 28th, 1851.

J. B.

A LETTER BY THE LATE MR. TURNER, OF
SUNDERLAND.

Beloved in Christ Jesus, the Sinner's everlasting Lover and unchangeable Friend,—The Scriptures sweetly inform us that his goings forth were from of old, from the days of eternity. He stood up from everlasting as the Mediator and the Surety of a better covenant; so that life was given us in the Lord from heaven, the second Adam, before ever sin entered into the world by the first Adam, and death by sin. This eternal life was with the Father before ever the world was, and was manifested in the flesh to his apostles, who saw, heard, and handled the word of life; and now, thanks be to the God of all grace, he is clearly revealed to us by the gospel, as God's salvation to the ends of the earth.

Truly blessed are those who know the joyful sound, and whose eyes (of their understanding) have been enlightened to see that Just One; and whose ears have been opened to hear his voice. The voice of this King of kings has power. It produces faith, and the obedience of faith. It makes darkness, unbelief, doubts, fears, sin, and guilt, and the temptations, accusations, and condemnations of the adversary fly before it; and brings light and life, joy, love, and peace, prayer and praise, into the soul. “He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast.” “Paul may plant, and Apollos water;” but only the great Head of the church, the Bishop of souls, can give the increase. We are sure to have a barren or unprofitable hearing, if it is only the voice of man, let that man be even Isaiah, David, or Paul. Past experience, viewed in the light of Scripture, proves what I have asserted. We have gone through many changes. Sometimes we have concluded, as Job did, “Changes

and war are against me." At other times, darkness has been turned into light; mourning into joy; the sackcloth into the garment of praise; adversity has been succeeded by prosperity; the prison doors have been opened, and the captive has been liberated. The text and the sermon have suited our case, reached our hearts; and light, life, love, and liberty have been enjoyed. Surely the Lord must have been among us, or the word could never have worked effectually in our hearts; for to this day we can do nothing without him. We certainly have a solid scriptural ground to conclude:

"Did Jesus once upon me shine?
Then Jesus is for ever mine."

For when the Lord speaks of his church and people, he says, "This is my rest for ever. Here will I dwell, for I have desired it."

Our God is not a disappointed God. He works, and none shall let or hinder it. Every opposition from blindness, prejudice, pride, and perverseness, unbelief, the love and power of sin, the dominion of Satan, &c., all fly before Omnipotent grace. When the power of the Saviour is put forth, the most stout-hearted, and the furthest from righteousness, are brought to submit and yield obedience to this conquering Lord. O what a blessed word is that: "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion. Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power," &c. (Ps. cx. 2, 3.) Blessed be God, we know the truth of it. The precious truths of the everlasting gospel have, when applied by his power, conquered our hard, unbelieving, impenitent hearts, and produced the "work of faith, labour of love, and patience of hope."

May the good Lord be graciously pleased to favour us with his presence and blessing as long as we are enabled to meet together in his name.

Yours affectionately,

Nov. 18th, 1830.

S. TURNER.

HE WILL BLESS HIS PEOPLE.

Dear Friend,—I have sent you two books, which I have just published. I hope to see you about the 14th of May, and trust the Lord will be with us. What a mercy it is that he is a very present help in trouble. He will, indeed he will, be with his people in every trial, though he will not always let us either see him or feel him. Still he will be there, bless his precious name! His love is better than life; and when he is graciously pleased to let us experience the unctuous droppings of it in our own souls, we can say he is altogether lovely.

I hope you and your wife and all the friends are well, and living in the sweet enjoyment of this love; at least that you now and then have a sip of it; for even that is worth ten thousand worlds.

That the Master's presence may be with you, is the prayer of

Yours in the Truth,

W. GADSBY.

A DREAM REALISED.

The following lines were impressed on my mind in a dream on the night of Sept. 17th, 1832, which I repeated so often, and with such delight, that when I awoke I could hardly believe I had been in a dream. I conceived that I proposed the following question to myself, saying :

My soul, did Jesus ever smile on thee ?

O yes, a thousand times.

But won't he call me to his bar,

And damn me for my crimes ?

No, never, never; impossible that case ;

For I am blood-bought, a sinner sav'd by grace ;

Because my debts are paid, though debts immense,—

My ransom cost an infinite expense.

But not one mite was left for me to pay,

Christ's precious blood cleansed all my debts away ;

Yet Satan sometimes dare dispute my claim ;

But Satan, hell, and sin, oppose my soul in vain.

The deed is done, I've nothing left to do,

But wait my Saviour's call, and then I go.

Sudbury, Sept. 17th, 1832.

DANIEL HERBERT.

*THEN WILL I VISIT THEIR TRANSGRESSIONS WITH
A ROD.*

Your rebuke, O beloved, is an excellent oil,

That shall not destroy me, but self-righteousness spoil ;

And in my right mind, though it oft brings a tear,

I love you the more for this true, godly fear.

Let one who has suffered for his folly now speak ;

May the Lord in your consciences make it sink deep.

Keep close to the flock who walk in God's fear ;

Fly daring presumption, 'tis death to be there.

Though justly rejected, yet one hath me led,

And placed on his bosom this poor, sinking head ;

And O for this love, while I draw mortal breath,

I would show forth his praises both in life and in death.

Yes, sacred spot, there is one that I love for ever

His memory's most precious, most precious to me ;

From his glorified spirit my soul cannot sever ;

For in the Lord Jesus it has union with thee.

Pure love and deep grief in my conscience within ;

O ! This is the time when that cursed monster, sin,

Is hated, forsaken, and trampled all down ;

For Christ in the heart now alone wears the crown.

O ! They are battles I've had for that word,

In the glorious appearing of my loving Lord ;

The sacred impression doth ever remain,

And sometimes God the Spirit shines on it again.

O the sweet peace that sometimes he brings,

'Mid this deep of corruption on his precious wings ;

Flutters over the word as the pure, holy Dove,

And softly whispers, "Thou art all fair, my love."

When this sin-burden'd body's for ever laid down,
 And the last link of mortality's riven ;
 Sure am I no sinner can place such a crown
 On his glorious head who has so much forgiven.
 O grace superabounding, that ever the Lord
 Should have taken such pains with his rod and his word ;
 That God, in Christ Jesus, should thus chasten me,—
 The best proof of his love which by grace I now see.
 The crown, then, for ever has fallen from my head ;
 But wherever my mourning soul may be led,
 There's a cleaving affection to people and place,
 And sometimes love burns to the Lord, through his grace.
 O sacred spot ! For was it not here
 That the Lord passed by when just in despair ?
 He came where I was, and this was his word,
 " I will stain all my raiment," said my glorious Lord.
 Between me and his Father in glory he stood ;
 " I will pass over thee when I see the blood."
 With ineffable glory the Spirit there shone,
 And all my transgressions for ever were gone.
 Yes, his track I now see, and how true is thy word ;
 In the one hand thy rod, in the other thy sword ;
 Consuming the wicked with the sword of thy breath ;
 Chastening thy children, but not unto death.
 But O the heart-groaning and deep hidden sigh,
 When the children of God so justly pass by ;
 When pastor and people appear to give up ;
 O Father ! O Father ! 'tis thy bitter cup.
 O lesson most painful, but carrying within
 The fire that separates the gold from the tin ;
 The brightest of saints will prove but a rod,
 To the backsliding soul from his Saviour and God.

A RESTORED ONE.

It is a comfortable consideration that all our trials and troubles are appointed in covenant love; their weight, duration, and effects were all ordained in the ancient settlements of eternity.—*S. Turner.*

AFTER that the law was given, and God's service set up, Moses the servant of God, died being a hundred and twenty years old; and at the commandment and commission of God, he left God's people to be ruled and guided by the faithful valiant Joshua, which also was a figure of our Lord Jesus. For like as it was not Moses, but Joshua that brought the people into the land of promise, even so are we brought into the eternal rest, not by the works of the law, nor through our own deserving, but by the grace through Jesus Christ; like as it is also with many words expressed of holy Paul, Heb. iv. Which thing though it be evident in many points, yet it is manifested specially by this, that he would not suffer the children of Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of Manasse to set up and have another altar, besides the only altar that the Lord had appointed them. For herein, as it is mentioned afore, was figured the virtue and perfectness of the only cross, death, and sacrificing of Jesus Christ. Therefore would not Joshua that anything should be set checkmate with the cross and oblation of Jesus Christ, but that all honour of cleansing and forgiveness of sins should be ascribed only unto him.—*Coverdale.*

MEDITATIONS ON VARIOUS IMPORTANT POINTS OF OUR MOST HOLY FAITH.

I.

THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL.

(Concluded from page 350.)

In resuming our subject at the point from which in our last No. we somewhat digressed, we have now to consider the *blessings which are promised* to accompany the Ministry of the Gospel.

These, as we have before observed, are much included in the *ends* for which the ministry was instituted, and to the examination of which we have already devoted so large a space. Still, as they are so rich individually, and so abundant collectively, we shall so far give a little further consideration to them as may enable us to examine, in the light of Scripture and experience, a few of the most signal and prominent.

But before we do this, we may remark that three points call for our special attention as connected with this part of our subject.

i. The *Foundation* on which all the promised blessings rest.

ii. The *Fountain* out of which they all flow.

iii. The *Nature* of the blessings themselves, as brought with a divine power into the heart.

i. The *Foundation* of the blessings communicated by the ministry of the gospel, as well, indeed, as of every other, is the good pleasure of God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, that they might be to the praise of the glory of his grace. (Eph. i. 6, 9, 11.) This is an immutable and immovable foundation; and it would be well for us who are engaged in the ministry not only to be well instructed and fully established in the persuasion of the firmness of this basis, but from time to time to refresh our souls and gather up new strength for the work by fixing our eyes and hearts more frequently and believingly on its stability and breadth. When we can see and feel that our gospel, not only in its contents, tenor, and spirit is in harmony with the word of truth, but that in preaching it we are doing the will of God from the heart, it is surprising what a source of strength is thence opened to carry us on amidst all our trials and discouragements from without and within. Paul could say of himself and his brethren in the ministry, "We are labourers together with God." How encouraging it is to believe that God himself is with us in the work; and whilst to realise this solemn truth may well make us tremble at our own deficiencies, yet, at the same time, what singleness of eye, and what strength of heart it is calculated to communicate in giving us some inward persuasion that God and we are working together by the same means and to the same end. And yet though so highly honoured as to be labourers together with God, yet is the work wholly his. It was this conviction which made the apostle add, "Ye are God's husbandry; ye are God's building." (1 Cor. iii. 9.) The labours, cares, and trials of the ministry are so great that the true servants of God need all the strength, help, and

encouragement which they can obtain; and what can afford them more than to believe that they are doing the will of God, and thus instrumentally labouring with him in preaching his word? This will deliver them from many fears, and, above all, from the fear of man, which bringeth a snare. This will afford a quiet resting-place for their weary souls, and often weary bodies, when on lying down at night they have the testimony of a good conscience that, according to the ability which God has given them, they have preached his word in faithfulness and affection. There is no truth more certain or more practical, both in individual and ministerial experience than that to fall back upon ourselves is to fall back on weakness, and to fall back upon the Lord is to fall back on strength. The work of the ministry demands also much patience and quiet endurance. As labourers, we are to be like "the husbandman who waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain." (James v. 7.) How much of the fruit of our labours is hidden from us,—wisely hidden, lest we should be puffed up with pride. How continual the labour, how vexing the opposition, how scanty the crop, how slow its growth. What need, then, we have of patience, that is, endurance, as the word literally means, that after we have done the will of God we may receive the promise.

ii. Nor is the *Fountain* less full than the *Foundation* is sure. What a treasury of grace there is in the Lord Jesus Christ! What an ample supply for all our need. The testimony of the Holy Ghost is that "God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Eph. i. 3.) Every blessing, therefore, which the gospel contains, holds forth, and communicates we are already blessed with in him. All are lodged in his glorious Person, as he sits enthroned on high at the right hand of the Father. When, therefore, he sends any blessings down through the gospel, it is but the communication of them out of his all-glorious, his ever-flowing, overflowing fulness. How full, then, the *Fountain*, and how precious should be the gospel, which is the appointed means of communicating these blessings to the poor and needy family of God.

iii. But this leads us to consider the *nature* of the *blessings* themselves; and must they not be equal to so firm a *Foundation* and so overflowing a *Fountain*?

1. The first all will agree in pronouncing to be *effectual calling*. How clearly and how gloriously was this manifested on that memorable day when the Holy Ghost at the feast of Pentecost called three thousand under one sermon! How quick, (that is, living,) and powerful was the word of God that day, when sharper than any two-edged sword, it pierced, as the word means, not merely "pricked" **

* The word rendered "pricked," (Acts ii. 37,) occurs only once in the New Testament, but is thus explained by Leigh, an old writer in his *Critica Sacra*, a valuable Lexicon of that period, A.D. 1646: "The word signifieth to vex, rend, and to wound punctually, (that is, with a point,) even every the least part and point of the heart; as if the sharpest points of many empoisoned daggers, and scorpions' stings had been all at once fastened in their

so many hearts and consciences as with one simultaneous stroke. It was as if the gracious Lord would not only manifest his risen power by sending down such a shower of blessings, but would thereby give a firstfruits as a sample of the harvest which was to be reaped by his labouring servants. Peter, therefore, said, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts ii. 39.) Though the Lord, therefore, does not confine himself to means, and can and does call some by his grace without the preached gospel, by applying his word privately to their heart, yet both Scripture and experience agree in testifying that the public ministry of the gospel is the more usual way. Thus the commission given to Paul was: "But rise, and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." (Acts xxvi. 16-18.) How he executed that commission, and the blessing with which the Lord attended it, we well know from the Acts of the Apostles, and the epistles which he addressed to the churches.

When the Lord sent forth his disciples just before his ascension to teach or make disciples among all nations, (margin,) baptizing them when thus made in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, he most graciously added, "And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Here, then, is at once our commission to go forth, and the blessing attached to it. We are to go forth, as Paul did, "testifying repentance towards God, and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ." And if we go forth in his Spirit, determined not to know anything among men save Jesus Christ and him crucified, we shall find, each according to the blessing vouchsafed to his labours, that after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knows not God, yet it pleases him, by the foolishness of our preaching, (as men esteem it,) to save them that believe.

2. The next blessing admits of as little doubt or controversy as

hearts, in the cruelest manner that can be devised." Dr. Gill also thus explains it: "*They were pricked in their heart.* The word of God entered into them, and was as a sharp sword in them, which cut and laid open their hearts and the sin and wickedness of them. They saw themselves guilty of the crime laid to their charge, and were filled with remorse of conscience for it; they felt pain at their hearts, and much uneasiness, and were seized with horror and trembling. They were wounded in their spirits, being hewn and cut down by the prophets and apostles of the Lord, and slain by the words of his mouth. They were as dead men in their own apprehension; and indeed, a prick, a cut, or wound in the heart is mortal."

We have brought forward these testimonies, as many think that they were merely pricked as with a pin, instead of being pierced through and through. Their very cry, like that of the Philippian jailer's, showed the severity of their wound.

the first. It is the *deliverance* proclaimed by the gospel, and revealed and sealed by it on the hearts of the family of God.

What was the commission of the Lord himself when, as the anointed prophet of God, he preached the gospel? "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, 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 appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." (Isa. lxi. 1-3.) The "good tidings," or the gospel, which he preached were to the meek; those whose hearts were meekened and softened, and thus made poor in spirit. (Matt. v. 3; Luke iv. 18.) The broken-hearted, the captives, the bound, the mourners in Zion, sitting in ashes and bowed down with the spirit of heaviness,—these were the characters to whom the Lord himself proclaimed liberty, and to whom he himself, through his own word, as made spirit and life to their souls, gave beauty for ashes, and the oil of joy for mourning. This, then, is our message, and this the blessing promised to attend it. Our word is not only to be a quickening, calling, regenerating, piercing, wounding word, whereby the dead hear the voice of the Son of God and live; but a delivering, healing, comforting word to those of the family of God whose hearts are broken by the law, bruised by the guilt and weight of sin, shut up in heaviness and bondage through unbelief, doubt, and fear, harassed by temptations, plagued by Satan and the dreadful evils of a heart laid bare by the two-edged sword of the word, and naked and bleeding before a just, righteous, and holy God. These are the poor to whom the gospel is preached, the flock of slaughter that wait upon the prophets, and know that it is the word of the Lord when it drops from their mouth with a divine liberating power into their hearts. (Luke vi. 22; Zech. xi. 7-11.) This is the sweetest part of the ministry of the gospel, and one of the surest testimonies of a minister's being sent of God.* To be the honoured instrument of bringing pardon and peace to a poor burdened, distressed soul, to pour oil and wine into a bleeding conscience, to dispel the doubts and fears which gather so thickly over a heart troubled by sin, and thus be a means of setting at happy liberty some dear child of God,—what a sweet consolation and blessed encouragement is this to a servant of Christ, and what a confirmation to him that the Lord is with him in the work! What union, too, what love and affection it creates in the hearer thus favoured and blessed to the servant of God through whom so great and often unexpected a blessing has come; and with what firmness

* We remember hearing our dear friend the late Mr. Warburton say in conversation that he believed men might be awakened under ministers of the letter, but that none were blessed and delivered except under God's own sent servants.

he can testify that it was the word of the Lord; for nothing short of that could have loosed his bonds, as well as that he through whom it came is a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in his mouth is truth. (1 Kings xvii. 24.)

3. And now what shall we say is a third blessing? What but the gracious *renewals* and *revivals* of the Lord's presence and power which keeps alive his work upon the soul? There are few of the Lord's living family who have not to learn feelingly and experimentally what havoc sin has wrought in them, and what a thorough wreck and ruin they are through the Adam fall and their own personal transgressions. They thus learn that as no man can quicken, so no man can keep alive his own soul. When, then, they are not favoured with the Lord's presence and power, they sink into carnality and death. The fear of the Lord still abides in their soul, and is still a fountain of life that they do not depart from him; but the more active graces of the Spirit, as faith, hope, and love, seem dormant or torpid, and, being cold and feeble in their operations, take little out and bring little in. From this coldness and deadness of spirit, as sensibly and painfully experienced by them, spring bondage, doubt, fear, misgivings, and exercises, as to the reality of the work of grace in their hearts. "If I am the Lord's, if he has communicated divine life to my soul, if he has manifested himself to me and blessed me, why am I thus?" asks the tried child of God. Now, if help be long delayed, he begins to fret and fume, complain and rebel, especially if he see others favoured and himself passed by. But this spirit of rebellion causes the Lord still more to hide his face, and this makes the load heavier, and the case seemingly more dark and desperate. Having lost his best Friend in the sensible light of his countenance and the power of his presence, sin begins to work with renewed strength; Satan, always on the watch to tempt or to accuse, allure or terrify, comes in with his baits or his charges, and under one or the other, the poor wandering sheep often falls. Now how suitable for a case like this is an experimental ministry—the ministry of a man well taught and exercised in his own soul, who can trace out the path from himself having walked in it; and how often the Lord is pleased to bless to those who thus sit in darkness and the shadow of death, his precious gospel in the mouth of a servant of his, who can thus speak a word in season to him that is weary. Burdened souls come up to the house of prayer, scarcely able to look up under the weight of their trials and temptations, scarcely daring to hope there can be anything for them, fearing rather that all they shall hear shall be to their condemnation. Now, what can the general ministry of the day do for such poor tried tempted souls, of whom there are many among the living family of God? Can a free-will ministry do anything for them, or a dry doctrinal one, or a light, trifling, jesting one, or a mere superficial one, just skimming over the surface of truth in the letter, but never diving into the experience of its power? All such ministries weary and disgust them, and are felt to be lighter than vanity. But let a gracious, experienced man of God speak out of a feeling, believing,

exercised heart, what life and power often attend his word. And how sometimes the Lord will be pleased to speak a word to their hearts, through his servant, which breaks their bonds asunder, and brings them up out of all their fears, once more to bless and praise his holy name. What a blessing to the living family of God is a gracious, faithful, and experimental ministry, and yet how scarce! How few seem able to take up the stumbling-blocks that lie in the way, to trace out the work of grace in the soul, especially in its wilderness and more advanced stages, and to bring forward strong meat for men, as well as milk for babes. How few seem to feel for and sympathise with that portion of the family of God who know the plague of the heart, the trials and temptations of the wilderness, the thorough helplessness and inability of the creature, and that none but the Lord himself, in the manifestations of his grace, can do them any good. "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs," was the Lord's injunction to Peter; and thus he bids his servants now feed *all* the flock, both the tender lambs and the stronger and sturdier sheep.

4. As the servant of Christ is a minister of the word, he will, as the Lord gives him ability, bring out of the word all that is needful for the *guidance* of the flock committed to his charge. This, therefore, we may mention as a fourth blessing of the ministry of the gospel. A shepherd has to go before, not behind his flock, to lead and guide them; not to be led and guided by them. But how can he do this unless he himself be taught and led by the Spirit, and be well instructed in the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven? The Holy Ghost makes him an overseer over the flock to feed, or, as the word literally means, to shepherd the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. (Acts xx. 28.) To do this well and properly, sometimes *instruction* will be needed. There is not a case or state, character or condition for which there is not some provision of this kind in the word of truth. How often is instruction needed, not only in the literal, but especially in the spiritual and experimental meaning of the Scriptures; and as the servant of God is enabled to open up this spiritual and experimental meaning, it will often cast a sweet and blessed light on the path in which his children are walking. Sometimes this word of instruction will discover to them secret snares, in which they have become unwarily entangled, or lay bare a temptation, on the edge of which they now find they are walking. Sometimes it will clear up a knotty and intricate path in providence, or throw light on some Scripture that just meets their case. Sometimes it will show them how they should act in a season of perplexity; sometimes it will strengthen their will to do what is right, and give power to make sacrifices, renounce bosom idols, and confirm a weak and wavering resolution to walk in the path of which God and conscience approve. Sometimes the ministry of the word will sharply *cut* and keenly *reprove*, and will so lay bare the secrets of the heart, that the poor child of God will feel scarcely able to look up before God and man. The word thus handled is, indeed, "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart," and lays it naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have

to do. (Heb. iv. 12, 13.) It is a great mistake to think that the ministry of the gospel is only to give comfort. There are states of soul, as there are states of body, when cordials would be poison. "Comfort us, comfort us, whatever be our state and case," cry some to their ministers. "However worldly, carnal, covetous, and careless we have been through the week; however up to our neck in business, and with nothing in our heart, mouth, or hands to distinguish us from all around us, we expect the minister to preach comfort to us on the Lord's day. This is what we pay him to do, and we expect him therefore to preach to us our full security in Christ, and to assure us that all will be well with our souls, whatever we may think, say, or do.

These we may call religious dram-drinkers, who look for their Sunday drink—their drop of comfort before they go out of the chapel, as regularly as the man who steps into a gin palace for his morning glass. Keen cutting reproofs, sharp rebukes, stern denunciations of all ungodliness, and no quarter given to sin, carnality, and worldliness, in any shape or form, such men have no relish for. "It is legal, it is legal," they cry, "to insist so much on the precept, and to cut so continually at all disobedience and inconsistency. We want to have Christ gloriously exalted, and to hear of nothing but covenant engagements, fixed decrees, the certainty of salvation to the elect, and that come what will we are safe for eternity."

But we will not dwell further on these points, or show how such men would willingly make even what they call a glorious Christ a minister of sin, and under great swelling words hide their shame. We will only say, better were it for a man to break stones on the road than stand up in a pulpit to deceive souls and be unfaithful alike to God and man. The more solemn the office, the greater the responsibility; the higher the post, the deeper the fall. Enough, then, enough of this. Time and space both admonish us that we should hasten to our fifth and last point.

V. The *trials* and *exercises* with the *comforts* and *encouragements* of the ministry.

And must these weighty matters be all discussed at the fag end of an article? Must we crowd into a few sentences the experience of years of labour? So bids stern December, and perhaps the wishes and patience of many of our readers echo back the call to finish our task with the finishing year. Be it so, then; for we are free to acknowledge that we have already protracted our Meditations on the Ministry to somewhat an inordinate length.

i. The *trials* and *exercises* of the ministry claim the first place. These we may roughly classify under two leading heads—1. Those which spring from himself. 2. Those which spring from others.

1. Had a minister nothing else to try him but his own heart, he would have trouble and exercise enough to last him all his days. But, like Issachar, he has to crouch between two burdens—the burden of self and the burden of the Lord, his burden as a Christian, and his burden as a minister. It is with the last only that we have now to do. A deep sense of his own incompetency for the work,

and his continual miscarriages under it, will always try a man who has any right sight and sense of what a minister of Christ should be. Poor, ignorant, proud, puffed-up men in the ministry may see and feel in themselves no such inefficiency or deficiency. A sound scheme of doctrine, a tolerable knowledge of the letter of the word, a natural fluency of speech, a bold unabashed face and manner, and the applause of light professors, carry many on as preachers who seem to have no spiritual sense or feeling of what the ministry really is. Until a man is led to see and feel by divine teaching what it is to be mouth for God, and to stand up before the people as his ambassador, a steward of his mysteries, a trustee of his gospel, an interpreter of his counsel, a messenger of his deputed, a witness of his dealings both in providence and grace with himself and others, and a servant who must one day give an account of his ministry to his heavenly Master, he will trifle both with God and man, and be unfaithful to his office, to himself, and to his hearers. His ignorance, his incompetency, his unfaithfulness, will be hidden from him by a thick veil of pride and presumption; and whilst the living, discerning family of God see in him nothing but barrenness and death, he will see in himself but little to censure and much to admire. But let a man once have his eyes opened to see what the ministry really is, and what he himself is as a minister, his unfitness in every way, both naturally and spiritually, for so great a work, his incompetency, his infirmities, his shortcomings, his inability to do or say anything aright, his ignorance, his unbelief, his fainting heart, stammering tongue, and faltering lips, his deadness, coldness, and unfruitfulness, his deep-rooted sinfulness, defiling all he touches, and his utter unworthiness to take the Lord's name into his polluted lips—all these feelings will, at times, so press upon him as to try him to the very quick, and make him doubt and fear whether he has anything to do with such a solemn, sacred, godly work as to preach the gospel of the Son of God. It is true that he knows what he preaches, for he has himself tasted, felt, and handled the word of life which he administers; he is quite at a point about the truths which he sets before the people, whether doctrine, experience, or precept; he labours to be faithful, and seeks neither money nor applause; and he has a single eye to the glory of God and the good of his people. And yet there is not one point in which he does not feel to come short; and this deeply tries his mind. Sometimes he is tried about his text; and if, after much prayer and labour of soul, he get one, then he is tried about his sermon. He is tried before preaching, in preaching, and after preaching; tried on Saturday night about what he has to say, and tried on Sunday night for what he has said. If a little helped, though he would bless God for it, he is still tried whether his liberty might not have been much in the flesh. If not sensibly helped, then he is tried whether he was ever called to the ministry at all. Thus he is never satisfied with himself, or if he begin to feel a little self-satisfaction, he knows at once that this is about the worst of his sins, for it is pride which is now puffing him up in one of its worst forms.

But he has *temptations* as well as trials. Thus sometimes he is tempted to unbelief, sometimes to infidelity, sometimes to question the whole work on his soul, and to fear whether he is not an awful hypocrite who has deceived himself, and well nigh everybody else. Sometimes he is tempted to think that he never should have put his hand to the plough, and to wish he were anything or anybody but a minister. The people can come, he thinks, and sit and hear, and no one need know what they fear or what they feel. But he, poor he, must stand up, whatever be his feelings; whatever darkness, bondage, or distress he may be labouring under, however shut up in heart or tongue, he must stammer out something. The people are come together, some perhaps from many miles, looking to him for a word of consolation and encouragement; and he is as empty as an up-turned pitcher, as confused as chaos, and as dark as midnight. The word of God is a sealed book, the heavens as brass, the text slipped away, and scarcely one idea left for the sermon. It is true that at such times the Lord most usually makes bare his arm, and helps his poor trembling servant far beyond his hope or anticipation; and some of these seasons have been the very best both for the minister and the people. Light and life break in upon his soul; the heavens are parted asunder, fervent prayer goes up, answers of mercy come down; sweet liberty is felt in preaching the word of truth; and O how he can now exalt the free grace of God, and set forth the Person and work, blood and righteousness, dying love, and risen power of his dear Son. This must serve as a sample of ministerial trials and exercises which spring from self, for we might fill pages with them.

2. But he has trials and exercises which *spring from others*. We pass by his trials from the world dead in sin, and the world dead in a profession. A real servant of God will keep himself separate from both; and as long as he does this, they will neither of them much trouble him. A disturbance in the street may be a passing annoyance, but what is it to a disturbance in the house—a disturbance in the family, among the children or the servants? Of all quarrels, the most trying are family quarrels. So the deepest trials of a minister, which spring from others, are church trials, family disturbances, family differences, family quarrels and contentions. Our dear friend, the late Mr. Gadsby, used to say, that next to one's own spiritual troubles, the greatest of all troubles were church troubles. And, indeed, the dear old man found it so, for, in his own language, his church troubles in his latter days broke his heart. The perverse, contentious, unyielding spirit of some, whom he cannot but receive, with all their faults and failings, as the children of God, deeply tries many a servant of the Lord. He is for peace, but they are for war. He hates and abhors strife and contention; but they seem full of it, and never more in their element than when, like a sea bird, in a storm. What painful spectacles often are church meetings, when a spirit of strife has entered into a church, and well nigh rent it asunder. Word brings on word, and argument leads on to argument; temper rises, angry expressions drop, and whilst

the meek and quiet sit and mourn in silence, the quarrelsome and contentious battle with one another, almost as if the fear of God were lost out of their heart.

But where a minister of God is spared such heavy trials as these, he will have exercises from other causes, almost as painful. Inconsistencies will break out in the church, of greater or less magnitude, which will deeply grieve his spirit. Reproach will be thereby cast on the cause of God and truth, and be reflected, perhaps, even on his ministry, as if it encouraged sin. He will see sometimes much death creeping over those who once seemed lively in the things of God; others much buried in the world, or overtaken with a spirit of covetousness, who once seemed spiritually-minded, and their whole heart fixed on heavenly things. His best bearers and dearest friends, pillars of the church and ornaments of the congregation, he will see taken away by the hand of death, and few or none raised up to take their place. He may have to see the cause sink very low, both as regards spiritual and temporal prosperity; little work going on, either in calling souls or delivering them, and much sloth, apathy, coldness, and indifference settling as a dark and increasing cloud on the church and congregation. Now if his soul be, as we assume it is, kept alive and lively in the things of God, all these things will deeply try his mind, and exercise both his faith and patience. And yet by these very trials and exercises his soul is made increasingly lively, for "by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of his spirit."

ii. But he has his *comforts and encouragements*. Indeed, what could he do, and how could he get on without them? To have nothing but trial and exercise, to feel nothing but bondage and misery in the work, would soon break him down altogether. The Lord, therefore, graciously, from time to time, comforts and encourages his soul, so that as his afflictions abound, so his consolation also aboundeth by Christ. When he is giving strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that are of heavy hearts, he gets a good drop himself of the wine of the kingdom, which he is bringing out for others; and as he drinks this, he forgets his poverty, and remembers his misery no more. He gives what he believes, and believes what he gives; faith is mixed with the word as it issues out of his heart and lips; and he thus not only ministers food as a servant, but sits down as a guest at the table. And as this inward feast of soul gives life to his word and power to his preaching, he comforts those who are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith he himself is comforted of God. One such good season makes up for many bad ones; and though he knows he may have to fast many days after his feast, yet the remembrance of it, and the savour which it leaves on his spirit enable him to go in the strength of that meat many days. What a true servant of God wants for himself is, not what some men think and call liberty, that is, a mere liberty of tongue, which is, after all, in many cases, a mere carnal, natural fluency of speech. True liberty is an inward liberty of soul, a sweet and holy freedom of spirit before God, not a mere gift of the

gab, (excuse the expression,) or a full and rapid flow of words, or even an unceasing stream of texts and quotations. The two things are quite distinct. A man of God may have liberty of tongue, and be bound in spirit; and he may have liberty of spirit, and be bound in tongue. It is when liberty of spirit and liberty of tongue go together that he is most happy and most at home, most in his element, and most in the enjoyment of his work. But he has also comforts and encouragements from *others* as well as *himself*, for though a good man is to be "satisfied from himself," (Prov. xiv. 14,) yet it is sweetly encouraging to him to see that the Lord is with him in the work. To go on preaching year after year, and see little or no fruit attending his ministry, how trying this must be to a minister whose heart is in his work, and who is continually longing for a blessing to rest on his testimony. But this is not usually the case with those whom the Lord himself has called to the ministry. He who has thus called him will, from time to time, give him proof by signs following that a divine blessing rests on his ministry. One after another will be raised up as witnesses to the power of the word; and every such witness will confirm him more and more in the persuasion that the Lord has called him to the work, and owns and blesses him in it.

But it is time to draw our Meditations to a close. The subject is so vast in itself, and has so grown under our hands that, with all our attempts to examine it in the light of Scripture and experience, we have come short of setting it before our readers as clearly and as fully as we could desire. Still, let them receive what we have written in the same spirit as we trust we have brought it forth; and we would affectionately ask our spiritual readers generally, and our brethren in the ministry particularly, to take our Meditations on the ministry as a whole, and not judge them by separate parts or isolated expressions. As we take a man's Christian character as a whole, as we take a servant of God's ministry as a whole, so deal with our treatment of this important subject. Take into consideration our general drift and meaning, and the spirit in which we have written. We have endeavoured to be faithful and discriminating, yet, we trust, have not been harsh, unkind, or overbearing. We have not spared, indeed, the general ministry of the day, but we have desired to show in word what we feel in spirit to every real sent servant of God—esteem, tenderness, and affection. The Lord ever keep and bless them; and in this day, when on every side the enemy seems coming in like a flood, may the Spirit of the Lord, by their instrumentality, lift up a standard against him.

THE stalk and ear are virtually in a small grain of corn. So are all the fruits of obedience which believers afterwards bring forth to God virtually contained in these seeds of grace. It is strange to consider that from a mustard-seed, which, as Christ says, is the least of all seeds, should grow such great branches that the birds of the air may build their nests in them. Surely, the heroic acts and achievements of the most renowned believers sprang from small beginnings at first, to eminence and glory.—*Flevel.*

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